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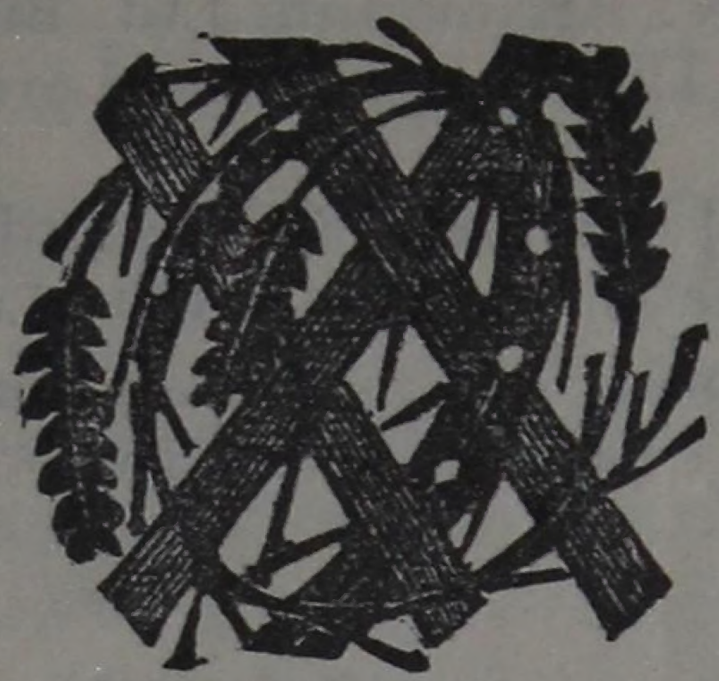
THE TOWER OF LONDON
BY WILLIAM HARRISON AINSWORTH

WILLIAM HARRISON AINSWORTH, born in Manchester in 1805. In a publishing business, 1826–8; edited *Bentley's Miscellany*, 1840–2, *Ainsworth's Magazine*, 1842–53, and thereafter the *New Monthly Magazine*. Died in 1882.

THE TOWER OF LONDON



WILLIAM HARRISON AINSWORTH

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INTRODUCTION

A BETTER holiday history of a great fortress, the military key to a greater city, cannot be had than this story by William Harrison Ainsworth of *The Tower of London*. It does not spare the sensations, any more than Cruikshank did in his pictures of the Tower; and it adds giants to men, and sharp terrors to the life and death of princes which are not always to be found in the exact record. But it shows a sense of vivid event and decisive circumstance, which gives its pages a schoolboy illusion quite sufficient for its purpose. Ainsworth showed a true instinct as a tale-teller by waiting to drive his heavy wedge of history home until he had got his ropes well into play. He does not describe the Tower in set historic terms, that is to say, till the reader has got well started in the second book. It is the fourth chapter there that pauses deliberately to recall its antiquity and first beginnings; map out its keep, fortress-walls, gardens, bulwarks, approaches, and moat; describe its palace-chambers, chapels, and dungeons; and summarise its roll of kings, princes, wardens, prisoners, and victims. There is little that need be said to further strengthen his "Chronicle" beyond referring the reader to the Tower itself. Some details, like those in the story of the other elder Dudley, Earl of Warwick, who died in the Tower and left behind him the carvings in which his brothers are symbolised by acorns, roses, geraniums, and honeysuckle, the third being the flower he used for Guildford, might have been turned to account, which are significantly omitted. But Ainsworth never cared to complicate his main fable by too many minor episodes and subsidiary characters. He knew what was wanted; and dropt a superfluous earl, and introduced a pasteboard giant or so, where he thought his story popularly required it.

The key to his unprejudiced reading of Queen Mary, her policy, faith, and character, is to be found in the sentences: "No one has suffered more from misrepresentation than this queen. Not only have her feelings been exaggerated, but her

virtues have been denied her." The portrait of her rival is highly conventional, but romantic; and although the story, like all Ainsworth's stories, does not really attempt to discover the hidden springs of human thought and action, it is dramatically realised in its close. The last scene between Lady Jane and her husband is told very simply and poignantly.

A couple of passages from the author's original account of the book make clear both his chief aim in writing it and his view of Queen Mary's character. It was his wish, he said, "to make the Tower of London—the proudest monument of antiquity, considered with reference to its historical associations, which this country possesses—the groundwork of a Romance; and to exhibit the Tower in its triple light of a palace, a prison, and a fortress. And he endeavoured to contrive such a series of incidents as should naturally introduce every relic of the old pile—its towers, chapels, halls, chambers, gateways, arches, and drawbridges—so that no part of it should remain un-illustrated."

As for the Queen, he continued: "To those who conceive that the author has treated her character with too great leniency, he can only affirm that he has written according to his conviction of the truth. Mary's worst fault as a woman, her sole fault as a sovereign, was her bigotry: and it is time that the cloud, which prejudice has cast over her, should be dispersed. 'Let us judge of her dispassionately and disinterestedly,' says Griffet;[1] 'let us listen to the testimony of those who have known her, and have had the best means of examining her actions and her discourse. Let us do this, and we may perhaps discover that the reproaches which Protestant writers have heaped upon her have been excessive; and after a strict and impartial examination of her character, we may recognise in her qualities worthy of praise.' "

William Harrison Ainsworth was a Manchester boy, born there, in King Street, the 4th of February, 1805. Like De Quincey, he went to the famous old Manchester Grammar School. Mr. W. E. A. Axon says that he has left in his novel, *Mervyn Clitheroe*, an accurate picture of the life of the school at that time, now all but a century ago. Ainsworth began his popular romancing with the aid of heroes like Dick Turpin and Jack Sheppard: and he was apt to make his soldiers highwaymen too. The favourite books by him are those that

[1] *Nouveaux Eclaircissements sur l'Histoire de Marie, Reine d'Angleterre.* Adressés à M. David Hume. 1766.

tell of old London and its familiar life, such as the present book and his *Old St. Paul's: A Tale of the Plague and the Fire of London*, which followed it in 1841. *Windsor Castle* is another of the historical tales that has kept its place. There is, too, a special group of Lancashire novels, including *The Lancashire Witches*, *Guy Fawkes*, *Preston Fight*, etc., which Mr. Axon affirms may almost be said to form a novelist's history of that shire, from the Pilgrimage of Grace to the early part of the nineteenth century.

Ainsworth died at Reigate on the 3rd of January, 1882, and is buried at Kensal Green.

E.R.

1909.

The following is the list of his chief works:—

Works of Cheviot Tichburn (pseudonym), 1822, 1824; December Tales, 1823; Poems (published under pseudonym), 1824; A Summer Evening Tale, 1825; Considerations of the best Means of affording immediate Relief to the Operative Classes in the Manufacturing Districts, 1826; Sir John Chiverton (? in collaboration with John Partington Aston), 1826; Rookwood, 1834; Crichton, 1837; Jack Sheppard, 1839; Tower of London, 1840; Guy Fawkes, 1841; Old St. Paul's, a Tale of the Plague and Fire of London (from the *Sunday Times*), 1841; The Miser's Daughter, 1842; Windsor Castle, 1843; St. James's, or the Court of Queen Anne, 1844; Lancashire Witches (from the *Sunday Times*), 1848; Star Chamber, 1854; James the Second, or the Revolution of 1688, etc., 1854; The Flitch of Bacon, or the Custom of Dunmow, 1854; Ballads, romantic, fantastical, and humorous, 1855; Spendthrift, 1856; Mervyn Clitheroe, 1857; The Combat of the Thirty. From a Breton Lay of fourteenth century, with introduction comprising a new chapter of Froissart, by W. H. A., 1859; Ovingdean Grange, a Tale of the South Downs, 1860; Constable of the Tower, 1861; The Lord Mayor of London, or City Life in the Last Century, 1862; Cardinal Pole, 1863; John Law the Projector, 1864; The Spanish Match, or Charles Stuart in Madrid, 1865; Myddleton Pomfret, 1865; Auriol, or the Elixir of Life, 1865; The Constable de Bourbon, 1866; Old Court, 1867; The South Sea Bubble, 1868; Hilary St. Ives, 1869; Talbot Harland, 1870; Tower Hill, 1871; Boscobel, 1872; The Good Old Times, the story of the Manchester Rebels, 1873; Merry England, 1874; The Goldsmith's Wife, 1874; Preston Fight, or the Insurrection of 1715, 1875; Chetwynd Calverley, 1876; The Leaguer of Lathom, a tale of the Civil War in Lancashire, 1876; The Fall of Somerset, 1877; Beatrice Tyldesley, 1878; Beau Nash, 1879 (?) or 1880; Auriol and other Tales, 1880; Stanley Brereton, 1881.

Editor of *Bentley's Miscellany*, 1838-41, 1854, etc. (in which several of his novels first appeared); of *Ainsworth's Magazine*, 1842-54 (when it was incorporated with *Bentley's Miscellany*); of *New Monthly Magazine and Humorist*, vols. 73-147. He also started *The Bœotian* in 1824, but the magazine only ran through a few numbers. Contributor to *Fraser*, *London Magazine*, *Edinburgh Magazine*, etc.

Life.—Memoir by Laman Blanchard, the *Mirror*, 1842; prefixed to later editions of Rookwood; John Evans, Early Life of William Harrison Ainsworth, *Manchester Quarterly*, 1882; W. E. Axon, William Harrison Ainsworth, A Memoir, 1902.

INSCRIBED

TO

THE MEMORY

OF

THOMAS AINSWORTH, ESQUIRE

OF

BEECH HILL

Near Manchester

BY HIS SON

Multis ille bonis flebilis occidit;
Nulli flebilior quam mihi—

HOR.

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THE TOWER OF LONDON

BOOK THE FIRST

JANE THE QUEEN

CHAPTER I

OF THE MANNER IN WHICH QUEEN JANE ENTERED THE TOWER OF LONDON

On the 10th of July, 1553, about two hours after noon, a loud discharge of ordnance burst from the turrets of Durham House, then the residence of the Duke of Northumberland, grand-master of the realm, and occupying the site of the modern range of buildings, known as the Adelphi; and, at the signal, which was immediately answered from every point along the river where a bombard or culverin could be planted, from the adjoining hospital of the Savoy, the old palace of Bridewell, recently converted by Edward VI., at the instance of Ridley Bishop of London, into a house of correction, Baynard's Castle, the habitation of the Earl of Pembroke, the gates of London-bridge, and, lastly, from the batteries of the Tower, a gallant train issued from the southern gateway of the stately mansion above named, and descended the stairs leading to the water's edge, where, appointed for their reception, was drawn up a squadron of fifty superbly-gilt barges, some decorated with banners and streamers, some with cloth-of-gold and arras, embroidered with the devices of the civic companies, others with innumerable silken pennons to which were attached small silver bells, "making a goodly noise and a goodly sight as they waved in the wind," while others, reserved for the more important personages of the ceremony, were covered at the sides with shields gorgeously emblazoned with the armorial bearings of the different noblemen and honourable persons composing the privy council, amid which the cognisance of the Duke of Northumberland—a lion rampant, *or*, double quevée, *vert*—

appeared proudly conspicuous. Each barge was escorted by a light galley, termed a foist or wafter, manageable either by oar or sail as occasion demanded, and attached to its companion by a stout silken tow-line. In these galleys, besides the rowers, whose oars were shipped, and in readiness to be dropped, at an instant's notice, into the tide, and the men-at-arms, whose tall pikes, steel caps, and polished corslets flashed in the sunbeams, sat bands of minstrels provided with sackbuts, shalms, cornets, rebecs, and other forgotten musical instruments. The conduct of the whole squadron was entrusted to six officers, whose business it was to prevent confusion, and who, in the small swift wherries appointed to their use, rowed rapidly from place to place, endeavouring by threats and commands to maintain order, and keep off the crowd of boats and craft of all sorts hurrying towards them from every quarter of the river. It was a brilliant and busy scene, and might be supposed a joyous and inspiriting one—more especially, as the object which had called together this assemblage was the conveyance of a young and lovely sovereign to her throne within the Tower. But it was not so. Young and lovely as was that sovereign, rich, richer, perhaps, than any of her sex, in endowments of mind and person, illustrious and royal in birth, professing and supporting a faith, then newly established throughout the country, and which it was feared, and with reason, might be greatly endangered, if not wholly subverted, if another and nearer claimant of the crown, the Princess Mary, had succeeded to the inheritance; still, with all these high recommendations, though her rights were insisted upon by the ablest and most eloquent divines from the pulpit, though her virtues, her acquirements, and her beauty were the theme of every tongue; as she was not *first* in the succession, and, above all, as she had been invested with regal authority by one who, from his pride, was obnoxious to all men, her father-in-law, the Duke of Northumberland, the Lady Jane Dudley's accession was viewed by all ranks and all parties with mistrust and apprehension. In vain had the haughty duke brought her with a splendid cavalcade from Sion House to his own palace. No cheers greeted her arrival—no rejoicings were made by the populace, but a sullen and ominous silence prevailed amongst those who witnessed her entrance into the capital. It is true that her youth and surpassing beauty excited the greatest interest. Murmurs of irrepressible admiration arose at her appearance; but these were immediately checked on the approach of Northumberland, who,

following closely behind her, eyed the concourse as if he would enforce their applauses; and it was emphatically said that, in pity of the victim of his soaring ambition, more tears were shed on that occasion than shouts were uttered. On the 9th of July, Lady Jane Dudley—better known by her maiden title of Lady Jane Grey—had been made acquainted with her exalted, but, as she herself (with a sad presentiment of calamity) pronounced it, her fatal destiny. Edward the Sixth had breathed his last, three days previously. His death had been kept carefully concealed by Northumberland, who hoped, by despatching false messages, to have secured the persons of the princesses Mary and Elizabeth. But intelligence of her brother's death having been communicated to the latter, she avoided the snare; and the duke, finding further dissimulation useless, resolved at once to carry his plan into execution, and proclaim his daughter-in-law queen. With this view, and accompanied by several members of the privy council, he proceeded to Sion House, where she was then living in retirement, and announced to her that the late monarch had declared her by his letters-patent (an instrument which he had artfully obtained) his successor. Jane refused the proffered dignity, urging the prior claims of Edward's sisters; and adding, "I am not so young, nor so little read in the guiles of fortune, to suffer myself to be taken by them. If she enrich any, it is but to make them the subject of her spoil. If she raise others, it is but to pleasure herself with their ruins. What she adorned but yesterday, is to-day her pastime: and if I now permit her to adorn and crown me, I must to-morrow suffer her to crush and tear me to pieces. Nay, with what crown does she present me? A crown which has been violently and shamefully wrested from Catherine of Arragon, made more unfortunate by the punishment of Anne Boleyn, and others who wore it after her; and why then would you have me add my blood to theirs, and be the third victim from whom this fatal crown may be ravished, with the head that wears it?" In this forcible and feeling language she couched her refusal; and for some time she adhered to her resolution, until at length, her constancy being shaken by the solicitations of her relatives, and above all by the entreaties of her husband Lord Guilford Dudley, to whom she was passionately attached, she yielded a reluctant assent. On the following morning, she was conveyed, as has been just stated, with great pomp to Durham House, in the Strand, where she received the homage of her subjects, partook of a magnificent banquet, and tarried

sufficiently long to enable the duke to collect his retinue to conduct her in state to the Tower: it being then the custom for the monarchs of England to spend the first few days of their reign within this ancient fortress. It is with the moment of her departure for this palace and prison of crowned heads that this chronicle commences.

The advanced guard of the procession was formed by a troop of halberdiers dressed in striped hose of black and tawny, velvet caps decked at the side with silver roses, and doublets of murrey and blue cloth, embroidered on the front and at the back with the royal blazon, woven in gold. Their halbert staves were covered with crimson velvet, fastened with gilt nails, and ornamented with golden tassels. Filing off on the right and left, they formed two long lines, extending from the gateway of the palace to the foot of the plank communicating with the barge nearest the shore. A thick rayed cloth was then unfolded, and laid down between them by several attendants in the sumptuous liveries of the Duke of Northumberland. This done, a flourish of trumpets resounded from within; a lively prelude arose from the musicians on the water; and two ushers with white wands marched at a slow and stately pace from the portal. They were followed by an officer bearing the mace; after whom came another carrying the sword of state; then several serjeants of the city guard, in their full accoutrements, and with badges on their sleeves; then the garter king-at-arms in his tabard; then several knights of the Bath, each having a white lace on his sleeve; then their esquires; then the judges, in their robes of scarlet and coifs; then the Bishop of Ely, who, in his character of lord high chancellor, wore a robe of scarlet, open before, and purfled with minever; then the aldermen, likewise in cloaks of scarlet; the sheriffs; and, finally, the lord mayor, Sir George Beame, in a gown of crimson velvet, and wearing the collar of SS.

Sufficient time having been allowed for the embarkation of these important personages, who, with their attendants, filled several barges, another flourish of trumpets was heard, fresh symphonies resounded from the river, and the heads of the different civic companies, in their robes of state, descended and departed. Many an eye tracked their course along the river, which flamed like a sheet of molten gold beneath its glittering burthens. Many an ear listened to the measured sweep of their oars, and the softening cadences of their minstrelsy; lingering, enchanted, on the sight and sound till both faded away in

the distance. Still, though a thousand pulses beat high, and a thousand hearts throbbed, not an acclamation was raised, not a cap thrown in the air, not a scarf waved. The same silence that had prevailed during the morning prevailed now. Queen Jane, it was evident, was not the choice of her people.

Meanwhile, two venerable persons had presented themselves on the stair-head. These were Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury, and Ridley, Bishop of London. They were attired in the scarlet simar, and surplice with its snowy lawn sleeves, proper to their order, and were engaged in deep converse together. The austere course of life prescribed to, and pursued by, the fathers of the Reformed Church, had stamped itself in lines of unusual severity on their countenances. Their demeanour was grave and singularly dignified, and such as well beseemed their high ecclesiastical rank. Arrived at the last step, Cranmer raised his eyes, and, after glancing around as if in expectation of some greeting from the multitude, observed to his companion, "This silence of the people likes me not, my lord: disaffection, I fear, is abroad. This is not the way in which our good citizens are wont to receive a triumph such as his Grace of Northumberland has prepared."

"Your Grace is in the right," replied Ridley. "The assemblage before whom I pronounced a solemn exhortation this morning at St. Paul's Cross—when I proved, as I trust, satisfactorily, that Mary and Elizabeth are excluded from the succession on the score of illegitimacy—received my discourse with murmurs of disapprobation. Vainly did I tell them if they accepted Mary they would relapse into darkness and idolatry: vainly did I enlarge on our young queen's virtues, and show them that she was prepared to carry into effect the wise ordinations of her pious predecessor. They made no answer, but departed, as men resolved not to be convinced of their error."

"These are signs indeed of troublous times," sighed Cranmer; "and, though it is not given to us to foresee the future, I cannot but fear that a season of bitter persecution of our church is at hand. Heaven avert the day! Heaven preserve Queen Jane, who will prove our surest safeguard! Had Mary ruled——"

"Had that false bigot ruled," interrupted Ridley, frowning at the idea, "your grace and I should, ere this, have changed places in the Tower with Gardiner and Bonner. But should what you fear come to pass; should evil times arise, and Rome and her abominations again prevail; should our church need a martyr, she shall find one in me."

"And in me," rejoined Cranmer, fervently.

While this was passing, twelve French gentlemen in splendid habiliments, consisting of pourpoints of white damask, barred with gold, short mantles of crimson velvet, lined with violet taffeta, and carnation-coloured hauts-de-chausses, took their way down the steps. These galliards, who formed the suite of M. Antoine de Noailles, ambassador from Henry the Second of France, were succeeded by a like number of Spanish cavaliers, the attendants of M. Simon Renard, who fulfilled the like high office for the emperor Charles the Fifth. Dressed in suits of black velvet, entirely without ornament, the Spaniards differed as much from the airy and elegant Frenchmen in gravity and reserve of manner as in simplicity of apparel. Their leader, Simon Renard, was as plainly attired as his followers, his sole decoration being the Toison d'Or: but of all that brilliant assemblage, perhaps there was none so likely to arrest and rivet attention as this remarkable man; and as he is destined to play no inconsiderable part in this history, it may be worth while to take a narrower survey of his personal appearance. Somewhat above the middle height, and of a spare but muscular frame, he had a dark complexion, rendered yet more sombre in its colour from the contrast it presented to his grizzled beard and moustaches. His eye was black and flaming, his nose long and hooked, and he had a stern searching glance, which few could withstand. There was something mysterious both in his manner and character which made him universally dreaded; and as he never forgave an offence, nor scrupled at any means of gratifying his vengeance, it was not without reason that he was feared. A subtle politician and skilful diplomatist, high in the favour of the most powerful sovereign in Europe, with apparently inexhaustible funds at his command; inexorable in hatred, fickle in friendship, inconstant in affairs of gallantry, suspected of being mixed up in every political intrigue or conspiracy, Simon Renard had been for some time the terror and wonder of Edward's court, and had been regarded with suspicion and jealousy by Northumberland, who looked upon him as a dangerous opponent. During Edward's lifetime frequent quarrels had occurred between these two crafty statesmen; but now, at this desperate conjuncture, the duke deemed it prudent to forget his animosity, and to conciliate his antagonist. More of a courtier, and not less of a diplomatist, but without the skill, the resolution, or the cunning of his brother ambassador, De Noailles would have been no match for Renard had they been opposed: and, indeed,

his inferiority was afterwards signally manifested. But they were now united by common bonds of animosity: both were determined enemies of Northumberland, both resolved upon his overthrow, and that of the queen he had placed upon the throne.

No sooner had the ambassadors entered their barge than, withdrawing out of earshot of their attendants, they commenced a conversation in a low tone.

"How long will this farce last, think you?" inquired De Noailles, with a laugh.

"Not a day, not an hour," rejoined Simon Renard, "if these suspicious and timorous English nobles will but act in concert, and confide in me."

"Confide in *you?*" said De Noailles, smiling. "They fear you more than Northumberland."

"They will not succeed without me," returned Renard, coldly. "Mark me, De Noailles, I, Simon Renard, simple bailli of Amont in the Franche-Comté, and an unworthy representative of his Majesty Charles the Fifth, hold in my right hand the destiny of this fair land of England."

"Ha! ha! ha!" laughed De Noailles. "You have learnt to rhodomontade at the court of Madrid, I perceive, Monsieur le Bailli."

"This is no rhodomontade, messire," rejoined the other, sternly; "were I to join with Northumberland and Suffolk, I could establish Jane upon the throne. Acting with the privy council, who, as you well know, are, like ourselves, the duke's secret enemies, I shall strike the sceptre from her grasp, and place it in the hand of Mary. Nay more, I will tell you that if I had not wished to ensure Northumberland's destruction, I would not have suffered him to proceed thus far. But he has now taken a step which nothing can retrieve."

"My hatred of him is as great as your own, M. Renard," observed De Noailles, gravely; "and I shall rejoice as heartily as yourself, or any of his enemies, in his downfall. But I cannot blind myself to his power. Clinton, the Lord High Admiral, his fast friend, is in possession of the Tower, which is full of armed men and ammunition. The royal treasures are in his hands; the troops, the navy, are his; and, as yet, the privy council have sanctioned all his decrees, have sworn obedience to Jane, have proclaimed Mary illegitimate, and deprived her of her inheritance."

"They shall eat their own words," replied Renard, in a sarcastic tone. "But it is time, De Noailles, to admit you to

my full confidence. First, swear to me, by the holy Evangelists, that I may trust you."

"I swear it," replied De Noailles, "provided," he added, smiling, "your scheme has nothing treasonable against my liege lord, Henry the Second."

"Judge for yourself," answered Renard. "There is a plot hatching against the life of Northumberland."

"Mortdieu!" exclaimed the French ambassador; "by whom?"

"To-night you shall meet the conspirators," replied Renard.

"Their names?" demanded De Noailles.

"It matters not," answered the other; "I am their leader. Will you make one of us?"

"Willingly," rejoined the Frenchman. "But how is the duke to be put to death?"

"By the headsman," replied Simon Renard. "He shall die the death of a traitor."

"You were ever mysterious, messire," observed De Noailles, drily; "and you are now more mysterious than ever. But I will join your plot with all my heart. Pardieu! I should like to offer Northumberland's head to Queen Mary. It would be as acceptable as that of Cicero to Fulvia."

"My gift shall be yet more acceptable," rejoined Simon Renard, sternly. "I will offer her the fairest and the wisest head in England—that of Queen Jane."

During this conference, the procession had been increased by several members of the privy council, consisting of the Earls of Arundel, Shrewsbury, Huntingdon, and Pembroke, the Lords Cobham and Rich, with divers other noble and honourable persons, among whom Sir William Cecil, principal secretary of state (afterwards, the great Lord Burghley), must not pass unnoticed. Pembroke and Cecil walked together; and, in spite of their forced composure, it was evident that both were ill at ease. As a brief halt took place amongst the foremost party, Cecil seized the arm of his companion, and whispered hurriedly in his ear, "We are lost, my lord. Your messengers to the queen have been arrested; so have my trusty servants, Alford and Cayewood. Luckily, their despatches are in cipher. But Northumberland's suspicions once aroused, his vengeance will not be slow to follow. There is yet time for escape. Can we not frame some excuse for landing at your lordship's residence, Baynard's Castle? Once within the Tower, I tremble for our heads."

"My case is not so desperate as yours," returned the earl, firmly; "but were it so, I would never fly while others are left to pay the penalty of my cowardice. We have advanced too far to retreat, and, be the issue of this project what it may, I will not shrink from it. Simon Renard is leagued with us, and he alone is a match for Northumberland, or for the fiend himself, if opposed to him. Be of good cheer. The day will yet be ours."

"Were I assured of Renard's sincerity," replied Cecil, "I might, indeed, feel more confidence. But I have detected too many of his secret practices, have had too much experience of his perfidy and double-dealing, to place any faith in him."

"You wrong him," rejoined Pembroke; "by my soul you do! As we proceed, I will give you proofs that will remove all apprehensions of treachery on his part from your mind. He has proposed a plan. But of this anon—for, see!—all, save ourselves, have entered the barge. Do you mark how suddenly the weather has changed? A thunderstorm is gathering over the Tower. 'Tis a bad omen for Northumberland."

"Or for us," rejoined Cecil, gloomily.

The sudden change in the weather, here alluded to, was remarked and commented upon by many others besides the Earl of Pembroke; and by most it was regarded as an evil augury against the young queen. The sky had become overcast; the river, lately so smiling, now reflected only the sombre clouds that overshadowed it; while heavy, leaden-coloured masses, arising in the north-east, behind the Tower, seemed to threaten a speedy and severe storm in that quarter. Alarmed by these signs, several of the more prudent spectators, who preferred a dry skin to the further indulgence of their curiosity, began to urge their barks homewards. The majority of the assemblage, however, lingered: a glimpse of a queen so beautiful as Jane was reputed appeared to them well worth a little personal inconvenience.

Meanwhile, a loud and prolonged trumpet-blast proclaimed the approach of the Duke of Northumberland. He was accompanied by the Duke of Suffolk, the father of the queen. Nothing more majestic can be conceived than the deportment of the former, nothing more magnificent than his attire. His features, though haughty and disdainful, with a fierce expression about the mouth and eyes, were remarkably handsome and well-formed. His figure was tall and commanding, and there was something which is generally associated with the epithets chivalrous and picturesque in his appearance. John Dudley,

Duke of Northumberland, who by his genius and rare abilities as a statesman had elevated himself to the lofty position which he now held, could not be less in age than fifty. But he had none of the infirmity of years about him. His forehead was bald, but that only gave expanse to his noble countenance; his step was as firm as a young man's; his eye as keen and bright as that of an eagle. He was habited in a doublet of white satin, with a placard or front-piece of purple cloth of tissue, powdered with diamonds and edged with ermine. Over this he wore a mantle of cloth of silver, pounced with his cipher, lined with blue velvet, set with pearls and precious stones, and fastened with a jewelled clasp. From his neck was suspended the order of the Garter, while in his hand he carried the silver verder belonging to his office as grand-master of the realm. The Duke of Suffolk was scarcely less magnificently arrayed, in a doublet of black cloth of gold, and a cloak of crimson satin flowered with gold, and ribanded with nets of silver. He also wore the order of the Garter. Suffolk was somewhat younger than his companion, of whom he stood, as indeed did all the other nobles, greatly in awe. He had well-formed features, a fine figure, a courtly air, and affable and conciliating manners; but though a man of unquestionable ability and courage, he wanted that discernment and active resolution which alone could have preserved him from the dangers and difficulties in which he was afterwards involved. His qualities have been admirably summed up by Holinshed, who describes him as "a man of high nobility by birth, and of nature to his friend gentle and courteous; more easy indeed to be led than was thought expedient, nevertheless stout and hardy; hasty and soon kindled, but pacified straight again, and sorry if in his heat aught had passed him otherwise than reason might seem to bear; upright and plain in his private dealings; no dissembler, nor well able to bear injuries; but yet forgiving and forgetting the same, if the party would but seem to acknowledge his fault and seek reconcilement; bountiful he was, and very liberal somewhat learned himself, and a great favourer of those that were learned, so that to many he showed himself a very Mæcenas; as free from covetousness, as devoid of pride and disdainful haughtiness of mind, more regarding plain-meaning men than clawback flatterers." Such, as depicted by the honest old chronicler above named, was Henry Grey, Duke of Suffolk, father of Queen Jane.

Just as the two dukes emerged from the portal, a slight com-

motion was heard in the outer court, and a valet, stepping forward, made a profound reverence to Northumberland, and presented him with a paper. The duke broke the silken thread and seal with which it was fastened, and ran his eye rapidly over its contents. His brow darkened for an instant, but as speedily cleared, and a smile of fierce satisfaction played upon his lips. "Traitors!" he ejaculated in an under tone, turning to Suffolk; "but I have them now; and, by God's precious soul! they shall not escape me."

"What new treason has come to light, brother?" demanded the Duke of Suffolk, uneasily.

"Nothing new, nothing but what I suspected. But their plots have taken a more dangerous and decided form," replied Northumberland, sternly.

"You do not name the traitors, but you speak of the privy council, I conclude?" observed Suffolk.

"Ay, brother, of the privy council. They are all *my* enemies —*your* enemies—the *queen's* enemies. This scroll warns me that a conspiracy is forming against my life."

"Heaven forbid!" ejaculated Suffolk. "Surely, our English nobles are not turned assassins."

"The chief mover in the dark scheme is not an Englishman," returned Northumberland.

"It cannot be the light-hearted De Noailles. Ha! I have it: it is the plotting and perfidious Simon Renard."

"Your grace is in the right," replied Northumberland; "it *is* Simon Renard."

"Who are his associates?" inquired Suffolk.

"As yet I know not," answered the other; "but I have netted them all, and, like the fowler, will spare neither bird of prey nor harmless songster. I have a trick shall test the true metal from the false. What think you, brother?—a letter has arrived from Mary to this false council, claiming the crown."

"Ha!" exclaimed Suffolk.

"It is here," continued Northumberland, pointing to a paper folded round his silver staff. "I shall lay it before them anon. Before I depart, I must give orders for the proclamation. Bid the heralds come hither," he added to the attendant, who instantly departed, and returned a moment afterwards, followed by two heralds in their coats of arms. "Take this scroll," continued the duke, "and let the Queen's Highness be proclaimed by sound of trumpet at the cross at Charing, in Cheapside, and in Fleet Street. Take with you a sufficient guard,

and if any murmuring ensue let the offenders be punished. Do you mark me?"

"We do, your grace," replied the heralds, bowing. And, taking the proclamation, they departed on their behest, while the duke, accompanied by Suffolk, entered his barge.

Preceded by two trumpeters, having their clarions richly dressed with fringed silk bandrols, displaying the royal arms; a captain of the guard, in a suit of scarlet bound with black velvet, and with a silver rose in his bonnet, next descended the stairs, and announced, in a loud and authoritative voice, that her Highness the Queen was about to embark: an intimation, which, though received with no particular demonstration of enthusiasm or delight by the spectators, was, nevertheless, productive of considerable confusion among them. The more distant wherrymen, who had been hitherto resting tranquilly on their oars, in their anxiety to secure a better position for their fares, now pressed eagerly forward; in consequence of which many violent collisions took place; great damage was sustained by the foremost boats, some being swamped and their owners plunged in the tide; while others, bereft of their oars, were swept away by the rapid current. Amid this tumult, much struggling and scuffling occurred; shrieks and oaths were uttered; and many blows from sword, dagger, and club were dealt, and requited with the heartiest good-will. Owing, however, to the exertions of the officers, no lives were lost. The drowning persons were picked up and carried ashore; and the disputants compelled to hold their peace, and reserve the adjustment of their differences to another, and more favourable opportunity. By the time Jane appeared, all was comparatively quiet. But the incident had not tended to improve the temper of the crowd, or create a stronger feeling in her favour. Added to this, the storm seemed fast advancing and ready to burst over their heads; the sky grew darker each moment; and when a second discharge of ordnance was fired from the palace walls, and rolled sullenly along the river, it was answered by a distant peal of thunder. In spite of all these adverse circumstances, no delay occurred in the procession. A magnificent barge, with two large banners, beaten with the royal arms, planted on the foreship, approached the strand. Its sides were hung with metal scutcheons, alternately emblazoned with the cognisances of the queen and her consort; and its decks covered with the richest silks and tissues. It was attended by two smaller galleys, one of which, designated the Bachelors' barge, was

appropriated to the younger sons of the nobility: the other was devoted to the maids of honour. In the latter was placed a quaint device, intended to represent a mount with a silver tree springing from it, on which was perched a dove with a circlet of diamonds around its neck, bearing an inscription in honour of the queen, and a crown upon its head. No sooner had the royal barge taken up its position than a train of twenty gentlemen, in doublets of black velvet and with chains of gold, stepped towards it. They were followed by six pages in vests of cloth of gold; after whom came the Earl of Northampton, lord high chamberlain, bareheaded, and carrying a white wand; and after the chamberlain, appeared the Lady Herbert, younger sister of the queen, a beautiful blonde, with soft blue eyes and silken tresses, accompanied by the Lady Hastings, younger sister of Lord Guilford Dudley, a sprightly brunette, with large orient orbs, black as midnight, and a step proud as that of a Juno. Both these lovely creatures—neither of whom had attained her fifteenth year—had been married at the end of May—then, as now esteemed an unlucky month—on the same day that the nuptials of the Lady Jane Grey took place. Of these three marriages there was not one but was attended with fatal consequences.

Immediately behind her sisters, with the laps of her dress supported by the Bishops of Rochester and Winchester, and her train, which was of great length and corresponding magnificence, borne by her mother, the Duchess of Suffolk, walked Queen Jane. Whatever disinclination she might have previously shown to undertake the dangerous and difficult part she had assumed; however reluctantly she had accepted the sovereignty; nothing of misgiving or irresolution was now to be discerned. Her carriage was majestic; her look lofty, yet tempered with such sweetness that, while it commanded respect, it ensured attachment. Her attire—for the only point upon which Jane did not conform to the rigid notions of the early religious reformers was in regard to dress—was gorgeous in the extreme; and never, assuredly, was rich costume bestowed upon a more faultlessly beautiful person. Her figure was tall and slight, but exquisitely formed, and gave promise, that when she attained the full maturity of womanhood—she had only just completed her sixteenth year, and (alas!) never *did* attain maturity—her charms would be without a rival. In mental qualifications Jane was equally gifted. And, if it is to be lamented that her beauty, like an opening flower, was rudely plucked and scattered to the

breezes, how much more must it be regretted that such faculties as she possessed should have been destroyed before they were fully developed, and the fruit they might have produced lost for ever! Reared in the seclusion of Bradgate, in Leicestershire, Jane Grey passed hours which other maidens of her tender age are accustomed to devote to amusement or rest, in the severest study; and, long before she was called upon to perform the arduous duties of her brief life, she had acquired a fund of knowledge such as the profoundest scholars seldom obtain. If this store of learning did little for the world, it did much for herself: it taught her a philosophy that enabled her to support, with the constancy of a martyr, her after trials. At the moment of her presentation to the reader, Jane was in all the flush and excitement of her new dignity. Everything around her was dazzling and delusive; but she was neither dazzled nor deluded. She estimated her position at its true value; saw through its hollowness and unsubstantiality; and, aware that she only grasped the shadow of a sceptre, and bore the semblance of a crown, suffered neither look nor gesture to betray her emotions. Her dress consisted of a gown of cloth of gold raised with pearls, a stomacher blazing with diamonds and other precious stones, and a surcoat of purple velvet bordered with ermine. Her train was of purple velvet upon velvet, likewise furred with ermine, and embroidered with various devices in gold. Her slender and swan-like throat was encircled with a carcanet of gold set with rubies and pearls, from which a single and almost priceless pearl depended. Her head-dress consisted of a coif of velvet of the peculiar form then in vogue, adorned with rows of pearls, and confined by a circlet of gold. At her right walked Lord Guilford Dudley, a youthful nobleman, who inherited his father's manly beauty and chivalrous look, with much of his ambition and haughtiness, but without any of his cunning and duplicity, or of his genius. He was superbly attired in white cloth of gold, and wore a collar of diamonds. Behind the queen marched a long train of high-born dames, damsels, youthful nobles, pages, knights, esquires, and ushers, until the rear-guard was brought up by a second detachment of halberdiers. Prepared as the mass of the assemblage were to evidence their dissatisfaction by silence, an involuntary burst of applause hailed her approach, and many, who thought it a sort of disloyalty to Mary to welcome a usurper, could not refuse to join in the cheers.

At the moment Jane was crossing the railed plank leading to her galley, a small wherry, rowed by a young man of slight

sinewy frame, clad in a doublet of coarse brown serge, and wearing a flat felt cap, on which a white cross was stitched, shot with marvellous rapidity from out the foremost line of boats, and, in spite of all opposition, passed between the state barges, and drew up at her feet. Before the daring intruder could be removed, an old woman, seated in the stern of the boat, arose and extended her arms towards Jane. She was dressed in mean attire, with her grey locks gathered beneath an ancient three-cornered coif; but her physiognomy was striking, and her manner seemed far above her lowly condition. Fixing an imploring glance on the queen, she cried, "A boon! a boon!"

"It is granted," replied Jane, in a kind tone, and pausing. "What would you?"

"Preserve you," rejoined the old woman. "Go not to the Tower."

"And wherefore not, good dame?" inquired the queen.

"Ask me not," returned the old woman, her figure dilating, her eye kindling, and her gesture becoming almost that of command, as she spoke, "ask me not; but take my warning. Again, I say, Go not to the Tower. Danger lurks therein—danger to you, your husband, and to all you hold dear. Return, while it is yet time; return to the retirement of Sion House—to the solitudes of Bradgate. Put off those royal robes, restore the crown to her from whom you wrested it, and a long and happy life shall be yours. But set foot within that galley—enter the gates of the Tower—and another year shall not pass over your head."

"Guards!" cried Lord Guilford Dudley, advancing and motioning to his attendants, "remove this beldame and her companion, and place them in arrest."

"Have patience, my dear lord," said Jane, in a voice so sweet that it was impossible to resist it, "the poor woman is distraught."

"No, lady, I am not distraught," rejoined the old woman, "though I have suffered enough to make me so."

"Can I relieve your distresses?" inquired Jane, kindly.

"In no other way than by following my caution," answered the old woman. "I want nothing but a grave."

"Who are you that dare to hold such language as this to your queen?" demanded Lord Guilford Dudley, angrily.

"I am Gunnora Braose," replied the old woman, fixing a withering glance upon him, "nurse and foster-mother to Henry

Seymour, Duke of Somerset, lord protector of England, who perished on the scaffold by the foul practices of your father."

"Woman," rejoined Lord Guilford, in a menacing tone, "be warned by me. You speak at the peril of your life."

"I know it," replied Gunnora; "but that shall not hinder me. If I succeed in saving that fair young creature, whom your father's arts have placed in such fearful jeopardy, from certain destruction, I care not what becomes of me. My boldness, I am well assured, will be fearfully visited upon me, and upon my grandson at my side. But were it the last word I had to utter—were this boy's life," she added, laying her hand on the youth's shoulder, who arose at the touch, "set against hers, I would repeat my warning."

"Remove your cap in presence of the queen, knave," cried one of the halberdiers, striking off the young man's cap with his staff.

"She is not my queen," rejoined the youth, boldly; "I am for Queen Mary, whom Heaven and Our Lady preserve!"

"Peace, Gilbert!" cried Gunnora, authoritatively.

"Treason! treason!" exclaimed several voices, "down with them!"

"Do them no injury," interposed Jane, waving her hand; "let them depart freely. Set forward, my lords."

"Hear me, sovereign lady, before I am driven from you," cried the old woman, in accents of passionate supplication, "hear me, I implore you. You are going to a prison, not a palace. Look at yon angry sky from which the red lightning is flashing. A moment since it was bright and smiling; at your approach it has become black and overcast. It is an omen not to be despised."

"Hence!" cried Lord Guilford.

"And you, Lord Guilford Dudley," continued Gunnora, in a stern tone, "you, who have added your voice to that of your false father, to induce your bride to accept the crown, think not you will ever rule this kingdom, think not the supreme authority will be yours. You are a puppet in your father's hands; and when you have served his turn, he will cast you aside, or deal with you as he dealt with Lord Seymour of Sudley, with the lord protector, *by the axe;* or, as he dealt with his sovereign, Edward the Sixth, *by poison.*"

"This passeth all endurance," exclaimed Lord Guilford; "away with her to prison."

"Not so, my dear lord," said Queen Jane. "See you not that her supposed wrongs have turned her brain? She is faithful to

the memory of the lord protector. If my reign prove as brief as she would have me believe it will be, it shall never be marked by severity. My first act shall be one of clemency. Take this ring, my poor woman," she added, detaching a brilliant from her taper finger, " and when you need a friend, apply to Queen Jane."

Gunnora received the costly gift with a look of speechless gratitude; the tears started to her eyes, and she sank upon her knees in the boat, burying her face in her hands. In this state, she was rowed swiftly away by her grandson, while the loudest shouts were raised for the munificence and mercy of Jane, who was not sorry to hide herself behind the silken curtains of her barge.

At this moment, a loud and rattling peal of thunder burst overhead.

Seated beneath a canopy of state, supported by the richest silken cushions, and with her tiny feet resting upon a velvet footstool, adorned with her cipher and that of her husband interwoven with love-knots, Jane proceeded along the river; her heart oppressed with fears and forebodings, to which she gave no utterance, but which the storm now raging around with frightful violence was not calculated to allay. The thunder was awfully loud; the lightning almost insupportably vivid; but fortunately for those exposed to the tempest, it was unattended with rain. Lord Guilford Dudley was unremitting in his assiduity to his lovely consort, and bitterly reproached himself for allowing her to set forth at such a season. As they approached that part of the river from which the noble old gothic cathedral of St. Paul's—one of the finest structures in the world, and destroyed, it is almost needless to say, by the Fire of London, when it was succeeded by the present pile—was best seen, Jane drew aside the curtains of her barge, and gazed with the utmost admiration upon the magnificent fane. The storm seemed to hang over its square and massive tower, and flashes of forked lightning of dazzling brightness appeared to shoot down each instant upon the body of the edifice.

" Like me, it is threatened," Jane mentally ejaculated; " and perhaps the blow that strikes me may strike also the religion of my country. Whatever betide me, Heaven grant that that noble pile may never again be polluted by the superstitious ceremonies and idolatries of Rome!"

Viewed from the Thames, London, even in our own time, presents many picturesque and beautiful points; but at the period to which this chronicle refers, it must have presented a

thousand more. Then, gardens and stately palaces adorned its banks; then, the spires and towers of the churches shot into an atmosphere unpolluted by smoke; then, the houses, with their fanciful gables, and vanes, and tall twisted chimneys, invited and enchained the eye; then, the streets, of which a passing glimpse could be caught, were narrow and intricate: then, there was the sombre, dungeon-like stronghold already alluded to, called Baynard's Castle; the ancient tavern of the Three Cranes; the Still-yard; and above all, the Bridge, even then old, with its gateways, towers, drawbridges, houses, mills, and chapel, enshrined like a hidden and cherished faith within its inmost heart. All this has passed away. But if he have no old St. Paul's, no old London Bridge, no quaint and picturesque old fabrics, no old and frowning castles, no old taverns, no old wharfs—if we have none of these, we have still THE TOWER; and to that grand relic of antiquity, well worth all the rest, we shall, without further delay, proceed.

Having passed beneath the narrow arches of London Bridge, the houses on which were crowded with spectators, and the windows hung with arras and rich carpets, the royal barge drew up at the distance of a bow-shot from the Tower. Jane again drew aside the curtain, and when she beheld the sullen ramparts of the fortress over which arose its lofty citadel (the White Tower), with its weather-whitened walls relieved against the dusky sky, and looking like the spectre of departed greatness, her firmness for an instant forsook her, and the tears involuntarily started to her eyes. But the feeling was transient; and more stirring emotions were quickly aroused by the deafening roar of ordnance which broke from the batteries, and which was instantly answered from the guns of several ships lying at anchor near them. By this time, the storm had in a great measure subsided; the thunder had become more distant, and the lightning only flashed at long intervals. Still, the sky had an ominous appearance, and the blue electric atmosphere in which the pageant was enveloped gave it a ghostly and unsubstantial look. Meanwhile, the lord mayor and his suite, the bishops, the privy council, the ambassadors, and the Dukes of Northumberland and Suffolk, having disembarked, the wafter having the charge of the royal galley drew it towards the land. Another "marvellous great shot," as it is described, was then fired, and amid flourishes of trumpets, peals of ordnance, and ringing of bells, Jane landed. Here, however, as heretofore, she was coldly received by the citizens, who hovered around in boats; and

here, as if she was destined to receive her final warning, the last sullen peal of thunder marked the moment when she set her foot on the ground. The same preparations had been made for her landing as for her embarkation. Two lines of halberdiers were drawn up alongside the platform, and between them was laid a carpet similar to that previously used. Jane walked in the same state as before, her train supported by her mother, and attended on her right hand by her husband, behind whom came his esquire, the young and blooming Cuthbert Cholmondeley.

Where there are so many claimants for attention, it is impossible to particularise all; and we must plead this as an apology for not introducing this gallant at an earlier period. To repair the omission, it may now be stated that Cuthbert Cholmondeley was a younger branch of an old Cheshire family; that he was accounted a perfect model of manly beauty; and that he was attired upon the present occasion in a doublet of white satin slashed with blue, which displayed his slight but symmetrical figure to the greatest advantage.

Proceeding along the platform by the side of a low wall which guarded the southern moat, Jane passed under a narrow archway formed by a small embattled tower connected with an external range of walls facing Petty Wales. She next traversed part of the space between what was then called the Bulwark Gate and the Lion's Gate, and which was filled with armed men, and passing through the postern, crossed a narrow stone bridge. This brought her to a strong portal, flanked with bastions and defended by a double portcullis, at that time designated the Middle Tower. Here Lord Clinton, Constable of the Tower, with the lieutenant, the gentleman porter, and a company of warders, advanced to meet her. By them she was conducted with much ceremony over another stone bridge, with a drawbridge in the centre, crossing the larger moat, to a second strong barbican, similarly defended and in all other respects resembling the first, denominated the Gate Tower. As she approached this portal, she beheld through its gothic arch a large assemblage, consisting of all the principal persons who had assisted at the previous ceremonial, drawn up to receive her. As soon as she emerged from the gateway with her retinue, the members of the council bent the knee before her. The Duke of Northumberland offered her the keys of the Tower, while the Marquess of Winchester, lord treasurer, tendered her the crown. At this proud moment, all Jane's fears were forgotten, and she felt herself in reality a queen. At this moment, also, her enemies, Simon

Renard and De Noailles, resolved upon her destruction. At this moment, Cuthbert Cholmondeley, who was placed a little to the left of the queen, discovered amid the bystanders behind one of the warders a face so exquisitely beautiful, and a pair of eyes of such witchery, that his heart was instantly captivated; and at this moment, also, another pair of very jealous-looking eyes, peering out of a window in the tower adjoining the gateway, detected what was passing between the youthful couple below, and inflamed their owner with a fierce and burning desire of revenge.

CHAPTER II

OF THE INDIGNITY SHOWN TO THE PRIVY COUNCIL BY THE DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND; AND OF THE RESOLUTION TAKEN BY SIMON RENARD TO AVENGE THEM

When the ceremonial at the Tower Gate was ended, Queen Jane was conducted by the Duke of Northumberland to an ancient range of buildings, standing at the south-east of the fortress, between the Lanthorn Tower, now swept away, and the Salt Tower. This structure, which has long since disappeared, formed the palace of the old monarchs of England, and contained the royal apartments. Towards it Jane proceeded between closely-serried ranks of archers and arquebusiers, armed with long-bows and calivers. The whole line of fortifications, as she passed along, bristled with partisans and pikes. The battlements and turrets of St. Thomas's Tower, beneath which yawned the broad black arch spanning the Traitor's Gate, was planted with culverins and sakers; while a glimpse through the grim portal of the Bloody Tower—which, with its iron teeth, seemed ever ready to swallow up the victims brought through the fatal gate opposite it—showed that the vast area and green in front of the White Tower was filled with troops. All these defensive preparations, ostentatiously displayed by Northumberland, produced much of the effect he desired upon the more timorous of his adversaries. There were others, however, who regarded the exhibition as an evidence of weakness, rather than power; and amongst these was Simon Renard. "Our duke, I see," he remarked to his companion, De Noailles, "fears Mary more than he would have us believe. The crown that requires so much guarding cannot be very secure. Ah! well, he has entered the

Tower by the great gate to-day; but if he ever quits it," he added, glancing significantly at the dark opening of Traitor's Gate, which they were then passing, "his next entrance shall be by yonder steps."

Jane, meanwhile, had approached the ancient palace with her train. Its arched gothic doorway was guarded by three gigantic warders, brothers, who, claiming direct descent from the late monarch, Harry the Eighth, were nicknamed by their companions, from their extraordinary stature, Og, Gog, and Magog. Og, the eldest of the three, was the exact image, on a large scale, of his royal sire. By their side, as if for the sake of contrast, with an immense halbert in his hand, and a look of swelling importance, rivalling that of the frog in the fable, stood a diminutive but full-grown being, not two feet high, dressed in the garb of a page. This mannikin, who, besides his pigmy figure, had a malicious and ill-favoured countenance, with a shock head of yellow hair, was a constant attendant upon the giants, and an endless source of diversion to them. Xit—for so was the dwarf named—had been found, when an infant, and scarcely bigger than a thumb, one morning at Og's door, where he was placed in the fragment of a blanket, probably out of ridicule. Thrown thus upon his compassion, the good-humoured giant adopted the tiny foundling, and he became, as has been stated, a constant attendant and playmate—or, more properly, plaything—of himself and his brethren. Unable to repress a smile at the ludicrous dignity of the dwarf, who, advancing a few steps towards her, made her a profound salutation as she passed, and bade her welcome in a voice as shrill as a child's treble; nor less struck with the herculean frames and huge stature of his companions—they were all nearly eight feet high, though Magog exceeded his brethren by an inch—Jane ascended a magnificent oaken staircase, traversed a long gallery, and entered a spacious but gloomy-looking hall, lighted by narrow gothic windows filled with stained glass, and hung with tarnished cloth of gold curtains and faded arras. The furniture was cumbrous, though splendid, much of it belonging to the period of Henry the Seventh, though some of it dated as far back as the reign of Edward the Third, when John of France was detained a prisoner within the Tower, and feasted by his royal captor within this very chamber. The walls being of great thickness, the windows had deep embrasures, and around the upper part of the room ran a gallery. It was in precisely the same state as when occupied by Henry the Eighth, whose portrait, painted by

Holbein, was placed over the immense chimney-piece; and as Jane gazed around, and thought how many monarchs had entered this room before her full of hope and confidence—how with all their greatness they had passed away—she became so powerfully affected that she trembled, and could with difficulty support herself. Remarking her change of colour, and conjecturing the cause, Northumberland begged her to retire for a short time to repose herself before she proceeded to the council-chamber within the White Tower, where her presence was required on business of the utmost moment. Gladly availing herself of the suggestion, Jane, attended by her mother and her dames of honour, withdrew into an inner chamber. On her departure, several of the privy councillors advanced towards the duke, but, after returning brief answers to their questions, in a tone calculated to cut short any attempt at conversation, he motioned towards him two ushers, and despatched them on different errands. He then turned to the Duke of Suffolk, who was standing by his side, and was soon engaged in deep and earnest discourse with him. Aware that they were suspected, and alarmed for their safety, the conspiring nobles took counsel together as to the course they should pursue. Some were for openly defying Northumberland; some for a speedy retreat; some for the abandonment of their project; while others, more confident, affirmed that the duke would not dare to take any severe measures, and, therefore, there was no ground for apprehension. Amid these conflicting opinions, Simon Renard maintained his accustomed composure. "It is plain," he said to the group around him, "that the duke's suspicions are awakened, and that he meditates some reprisal. What it is will presently be seen. But trust in me, and you shall yet wear your heads upon your shoulders."

At the expiration of a quarter of an hour, the queen, who had been summoned by Lord Guilford Dudley, reappeared. The great door was then instantly thrown open by two officials with white wands, and, attended by Northumberland, to whom she gave her hand, traversing a second long gallery, she descended a broad flight of steps, and entered upon another range of buildings, which has since shared the fate of the old palace, but which then, extending in a northerly direction, and flanked on the right by a fortification denominated the Wardrobe Tower, connected the royal apartments with the White Tower. Taking her way through various halls, chambers, and passages in this pile, Jane, at length, arrived at the foot of a wide stone staircase, on

mounting which she found herself in a large and lofty chamber, with a massive roof crossed and supported by ponderous beams of timber. This room, which was situated within the White Tower, and which Jane was apprised adjoined the council-chamber, was filled with armed men. Smiling at this formidable assemblage, Northumberland directed the queen towards a circular-arched opening in the wall on the right, and led her into a narrow vaulted gallery formed in the thickness of the wall. A few steps brought them to another narrow gallery, branching off on the left, along which they proceeded. Arrived at a wide opening in the wall, a thick curtain was then drawn aside by two attendants, and Jane was ushered into the council-chamber. The sight which met her gaze was magnificent beyond description. The vast hall, resembling in all respects the antechamber she had just quitted, except that it was infinitely more spacious, with its massive roof hung with banners and its wooden pillars decorated with velvet and tapestry, was crowded to excess with all the principal persons and their attendants who had formed her retinue in her passage along the river, grouped according to their respective ranks. At the upper end of the chamber, beneath a golden canopy, was placed the throne; on the right of which stood the members of the privy council, and on the left the bishops. Opposite to the throne, at the lower extremity of the room, the walls were hung with a thick curtain of black velvet, on which was displayed a large silver scutcheon charged with the royal blazon. Before this curtain was drawn up a line of arquebusiers, each with a caliver upon his shoulder.

No sooner was the queen seated, than Northumberland, who had placed himself at the foot of the throne, prostrated himself, and besought her permission to lay before the lords of the council a despatch, just received from the Lady Mary; which being accorded, he arose, and, turning towards them, unfolded a paper, and addressed them in a stern tone as follows: "My lords," he began, "it will scarcely surprise you to be informed that the Lady Mary, in the letter I here hold, given under her signet, and dated from Kenninghall in Norfolk, lays claim to the imperial crown of this realm, and requires and charges you, of your allegiance, which you owe to her, and to none other—it is so written, my lords—to employ yourselves for the honour and surety of her person only; and furthermore, to cause her right and title to the crown and government of the realm to be proclaimed within the city of London and other places, as to your wisdoms shall seem good. Now, my lords, what say you?

What answer will you make to these insolent demands—to these idle and imaginary claims?"

"None whatever," replied the Earl of Pembroke; "we will treat them with the scorn they merit."

"That may not be, my lord," observed Queen Jane; "your silence will be misconstrued."

"Ay, marry will it," rejoined Northumberland, glancing fiercely at the earl; "and your advice, my lord of Pembroke, savours strongly of disloyalty. I will tell you how you shall answer this misguided lady. You shall advertise her, firstly, that on the death of our sovereign lord, Edward the Sixth, Queen Jane became invested and possessed with the just and right title in the imperial crown of this realm, not only by good order of ancient laws, but also by our late sovereign lord's letters-patent, signed with his own hand, and sealed with the great seal of England, in presence of the most part of the nobles, councillors, judges, and divers other grave and sage personages, assenting to and subscribing the same. You shall next tell her, that having sworn allegiance to Queen Jane, you can offer it to no other, except you would fall into grievous and unspeakable enormities. You shall also remind her, that by the divorce made between the king of famous memory, King Henry the Eighth, and the lady Catherine her mother, confirmed by sundry acts of parliament yet in force, she was justly made illegitimate and unheritable to the crown of this realm. And lastly, you shall require her to surcease, by any pretence, to vex and molest our sovereign lady Queen Jane, or her subjects from their true faith and allegiance unto her grace. This, my lords, is the answer you shall return."

"We will consider of it," cried several voices.

"Your decision must be speedy," returned the duke, scornfully; "a messenger waits without, to convey your reply to the Lady Mary. And to spare your lordships any trouble in penning the despatch, I have already prepared it."

"Prepared it!" ejaculated Cecil.

"Ay, prepared it," repeated the duke. "It is here," he added, producing a parchment, "fairly enough written, and only lacking your lordships' signatures. Will it please you, Sir William Cecil, or you, my lord of Pembroke, or you, Shrewsbury, to cast an eye over it, to see whether it differs in aught from what I have counselled as a fitting answer to Mary's insolent message? You are silent: then, I may conclude you are satisfied."

"Your grace concludes more than you have warrant for," rejoined the Earl of Pembroke; "I am *not* satisfied, nor will I subscribe that letter."

"Nor I," added Cecil.

"Nor I," repeated several others.

"We shall see," returned Northumberland: "bring pen and ink," he added, motioning to an attendant, by whom his commands were instantly obeyed. "Your grace of Canterbury," he continued, addressing Cranmer, "will sign it first. 'Tis well. And now, my lord Marquess of Winchester, your signature; my Lord Bedford, yours; now yours, Northampton; yours, my lord chancellor; next, I shall attach my own; and now yours, brother of Suffolk. You see, my lords," he said, with a bitter smile, "you will be well kept in countenance."

While this was passing, Simon Renard, who stood among the throng of privy councillors, observed in a whisper to those nearest him, "If this despatch is signed and sent forth, Mary's hopes are ruined. She will suspect some treachery on the part of her friends, and immediately embark for France, which is what Northumberland desires to accomplish."

"His scheme shall be defeated, then," replied Pembroke; "it never shall be signed."

"Be not too sure of that," rejoined Renard, with a scarcely-repressed sneer.

"And now, my lord of Arundel," said the duke, taking the document from Suffolk, "we tarry for your signature."

"Then your grace must tarry still longer," replied Arundel, sullenly, "for I am in no mood to furnish it."

"Ha!" exclaimed Northumberland, fiercely; but, instantly checking himself, he turned to the next peer, and continued: "I will pass on, then, to you, Lord Shrewsbury. I am assured of *your* loyalty. What! do you, too, desert your queen? God's mercy! my lord, I have been strangely mistaken in you. Pembroke, you can now prove I was in error. You fold your arms—'tis well! I understand you. Rich, Huntingdon, Darcy, I appeal to you. My lords! my lords! you forget to whom you owe allegiance. Sir Thomas Cheney—do you not hear me speak to you, Sir Thomas? Cecil, my politic, crafty Cecil—a few strokes of your pen is all I ask, and those you refuse me. Gates, Petre, Cheke—will none of you move? will none sign?"

"None," answered Pembroke.

"It is false," cried Northumberland, imperiously; "you shall *all* sign—*all!* vile, perjured traitors that you are! I will

have your hands to this paper, or, by God's precious soul! I will seal it with your blood. Now, will you obey me?"

There was a stern, deep silence.

"Will you obey him?" demanded Renard, in a mocking whisper.

"No!" answered Pembroke, fiercely.

"Guards!" cried Northumberland, "advance, and attach their persons."

The command was instantly obeyed by the arquebusiers, who marched forward and surrounded them.

Jane fixed an inquiring look upon Northumberland, but she spoke not.

"What next?" demanded Pembroke, in a loud voice.

"The block," replied Northumberland.

"The block!" exclaimed Jane, rising, while the colour forsook her cheek. "Oh! no, my lord—no."

"But I say yea," returned the duke, peremptorily. "'Fore Heaven! these rebellious lords think I am as fearful of shedding blood as they are of shedding ink. But they shall find they are mistaken. Away with them to instant execution."

"Your grace cannot mean this!" cried Jane, horror-stricken.

"They shall have five minutes for reflection," returned the duke, sternly. "After that time, nothing shall save them."

An earnest consultation was held among the council. Three minutes had expired. The duke beckoned a sergeant of the guard towards him.

"You had better sign," whispered Simon Renard; "I will find some means of communicating with her highness."

"We have reflected," cried the Earl of Pembroke, "and will do your grace's behests."

"It is well," answered Northumberland. "Set them free."

As soon as the guard had withdrawn, the council advanced, and each, in turn, according to his degree, subscribed the despatch. This done, Northumberland delivered it to an officer, enjoining him to give it instantly to the messenger, with orders to the latter to ride for his life, and not to draw bridle till he reached Kenninghall.

"And now," continued the duke, addressing another officer, "let the gates of the Tower be closed, the drawbridges raised, and suffer none to go forth, on pain of death, without my written order."

"Diable!" exclaimed De Noailles, shrugging his shoulders.

"Prisoners!" cried several of the privy councillors.

"You are the queen's guests, my lords," observed the duke, drily.

"Do you agree to my scheme now?" asked Renard, in a deep whisper. "Do you consent to Northumberland's assassination?"

"I do," replied Pembroke. "But who will strike the blow?"

"I will find the man," answered Renard.

These words, though uttered under the breath of the speakers, reached the ears of Cuthbert Cholmondeley.

Shortly afterwards, the council broke up; and Jane was conducted with much state to the royal apartments.

CHAPTER III

OF THE THREE GIANTS OF THE TOWER, OG, GOG, AND MAGOG; OF XIT, THE DWARF; OF THE FAIR CICELY; OF PETER TRUSBUT, THE PANTLER, AND POTENTIA HIS WIFE; OF HAIRUN THE BEARWARD, RIBALD THE WARDER, MAUGER THE HEADSMAN, AND NIGHTGALL THE JAILER: AND OF THE PLEASANT PASTIME HELD IN THE STONE KITCHEN

Cuthbert Cholmondeley, it may be remembered, was greatly struck by a beautiful damsel whom he discovered among the crowd during the ceremonial at the Gate Tower; and, as faithful chroniclers, we are bound to state that the impression was mutual, and that if he was charmed with the lady, she was not less pleased with him. Notwithstanding her downcast looks, the young esquire was not so inexperienced in feminine arts as to be unconscious of the conquest he had made. During the halt at the gate, he never withdrew his eyes from her for a single moment, and when he was reluctantly compelled to move forward with the procession, he cast many a lingering look behind. As the distance lengthened between them, the courage of the damsel seemed to revive; she raised her head, and before her admirer had reached the extremity of the lofty wall masking the lieutenant's lodgings, he perceived her gazing fixedly after him. She held by the hand a little curly-haired boy, whom Cholmondeley concluded must be her brother, and he was perplexing himself as to her rank—for though her beauty was of the highest order and her lineaments such as might well belong to one of high birth, her attire seemed to bespeak her of no exalted condition—when an incident occurred, which changed

the tenor of his thoughts, and occasioned him not a little uneasiness. While she remained with her eyes fixed upon him, a tall man in a dark dress rushed, with furious gestures and an inflamed countenance, out of the gateway leading to the inner line of fortifications on the left, and shaking his hand menacingly at the esquire, forced her away. Cholmondeley saw her no more; but the imploring look which she threw at him as she disappeared, produced so powerful an effect upon his feelings that it was with difficulty he could prevent himself from flying to her assistance. So absorbed was he by this idea, that he could think of nothing else; the pageant, at which he was assisting, lost all interest for him, and amid the throng of court beauties who surrounded him, he beheld only the tender blue eyes, the light satin tresses, the ravishing countenance, and sylph-like person of the unknown maiden. Nor could he exclude from his recollection the figure of the tall dark man; and he vainly questioned himself as to the tie subsisting between him and the damsel. Could he be her father? Though his age might well allow of such a supposition, there was no family resemblance to warrant it. Her husband?—that he was scarcely disposed to admit. Her lover?—he trembled with jealous rage at the idea. In this perplexity, he bethought himself of applying for information to one of the warders; and, accordingly, he addressed himself to Magog, who, with Xit, happened to be standing near him. Describing the damsel, he inquired of the giant whether he knew anything of her.

"Know her!" rejoined Magog, "ay, marry, do I. Who that dwells within this fortress knows not fair Mistress Cicely, the Rose of the Tower, as she is called? She is daughter to Dame Potentia Trusbut, wife of Peter the pantler"—

"A cook's daughter!" exclaimed Cholmondeley, all his dreams of high-born beauty vanishing at once.

"Nay, I ought rather to say," returned the giant, noticing the young man's look of blank disappointment, and guessing the cause, "that she *passes* for his daughter."

"I breathe again," murmured Cholmondeley.

"Her real birth is a mystery," continued Magog; "or, if the secret is known at all, it is only to the worthy pair who have adopted her. She is said to be the offspring of some illustrious and ill-fated lady, who was imprisoned within the Tower, and died in one of its dungeons, after giving birth to a female child, during the reign of our famous king, Harry the Eighth," and he reverently doffed his bonnet as he pronounced his sire's name;

"but I know nothing of the truth or falsity of the story, and merely repeat it because you seem curious about her."

"Your intelligence delights me," replied Cholmondeley, placing a noble in his hand. "Can you bring me where I can obtain further sight of her?"

"Ay, and speech too, worshipful sir, if you desire it," replied the giant, a smile illuminating his ample features. "When the evening banquet is over, and my attendance at the palace is no longer required, I shall repair to the Stone Kitchen at Master Trusbut's dwelling, where a supper is provided for certain of the warders and other officers of the Tower, to which I and my brethren are invited, and if it please you to accompany us, you are almost certain to behold her."

Cholmondeley eagerly embraced the offer, and it was next arranged that the dwarf should summon him at the proper time.

"If your worship requires a faithful emissary to convey a letter or token to the fair damsel," interposed Xit, "I will undertake the office."

"Fail not to acquaint me when your master is ready," replied Cholmondeley, "and I will reward you. There is one question," he continued, addressing Magog, "which I have omitted to ask. Who is the tall dark man who seems to exercise such strange control over her? Can it be her adoptive father, the pantler?"

"Of a surety no," replied the giant, grinning, "Peter Trusbut is neither a tall man nor a dark; but is short, plump, and rosy, as beseems his office. The person to whom your worship alludes must be Master Lawrence Nightgall, the chief jailer, who lately paid his suit to her. He is of a jealous and revengeful temper, and is not unlikely to take it in dudgeon that a handsome gallant should set eyes upon the object of his affections."

"Your description answers exactly to the man I mean," returned Cholmondeley, gravely.

"Shall I bear a cartel to him from your worship?" said Xit. "Or, if you require a guard, I will attend upon your person," he added, tapping the pummel of his sword.

"I do not require your services in either capacity, as yet, valiant sir," replied the esquire, smiling. "After the banquet I shall expect you."

Resuming his place near Lord Guilford Dudley, Cholmondeley shortly afterwards proceeded with the royal cortège to the council-chamber, where, being deeply interested by Northumberland's address to the conspiring lords, he for an instant forgot the object nearest his heart. But the next, it returned with

greater force than ever; and he was picturing to himself the surprise, and, as he fondly hoped, the delight, he should occasion her by presenting himself at her dwelling, when Simon Renard's dark proposal to the Earl of Pembroke reached his ear. Anxious to convey the important information he had thus obtained to his master, as soon as possible, he endeavoured to approach him, but at this moment the council broke up, and the whole train returned to the palace. During the banquet that followed, no opportunity for an instant's private conference occurred—the signal for the separation of the guests being the departure of the queen and her consort. While he was considering within himself what course he had best pursue, he felt his mantle slightly plucked behind, and, turning at the touch, beheld the dwarf.

"My master, the giant Magog, awaits you without, worshipful sir," said Xit, with a profound reverence.

Weighing his sense of duty against his love, he found the latter feeling too strong to be resisted. Contenting himself, therefore, with tracing a hasty line of caution upon a leaf torn from his tablets, he secured it with a silken thread, and delivering it to an attendant, commanded him instantly to take it to the Lord Guilford Dudley. The man departed, and Cholmondeley, putting himself under the guidance of the dwarf, followed him to the great stairs, down which he strutted with a most consequential air, his long rapier clanking at each step he took. Arrived at the portal, the young esquire found the three giants, who had just been relieved from further attendance by another detachment of warders, and, accompanied by them, proceeded along the ward in the direction of the Gate Tower. Sentinels, he perceived, were placed at ten paces' distance from each other along the ramparts; and the guards on the turrets, he understood from his companions, were doubled. On reaching the Gate Tower, they found a crowd of persons, some of whom, on presenting passes from the Duke of Northumberland, were allowed to go forth, while others, not thus provided, were peremptorily refused. While the giants paused for a moment to contemplate this novel scene, an officer advanced from the barbican and acquainted the keepers of the inner portal that a prisoner was about to be brought in. At this intelligence, a wicket was opened, and two heralds, followed by a band of halberdiers, amidst whom walked the prisoner, stepped through it. Torches were then lighted by some of the warders, to enable them to discern the features of the latter, when it appeared,

from his ghastly looks, his blood-stained apparel, and his hair, which was closely matted to his head by the muddy stream that flowed from it, that some severe punishment had been recently inflicted upon him. He was a young man of nineteen or twenty, habited in a coarse dress of brown serge, of a slight but well-proportioned figure, and handsome features, though now distorted with pain and sullied with blood, and was instantly recognised by Cholmondeley as the individual who had rowed Gunnora Braose towards the queen. On making the discovery, Cholmondeley instantly demanded, in a stern tone, of the heralds, how they had dared, in direct opposition to their sovereign's injunctions, to punish an offender whom she had pardoned.

"We have the Duke of Northumberland's authority for what we have done," replied the foremost herald, sullenly; "that is sufficient for us."

"The punishment we have inflicted is wholly disproportioned to the villain's offence, which is little short of high treason," observed the other. "When we proclaimed the Queen's Highness at Cheapside, the audacious knave mounted a wall, flung his cap into the air, and shouted for Queen Mary. For this we set him in the pillory, and nailed his head to the wood; and he may think himself fortunate if he loseth it not as well as his ears, which have been cut off by the hangman."

"Ungrateful wretch!" cried Cholmondeley, addressing the prisoner, his former commiseration being now changed to anger; "is it thus you requite the bounty of your queen?"

"I will never acknowledge a usurper," returned Gilbert, firmly.

"Peace!" cried the esquire; "your rashness will destroy you."

"It may so," retorted Gilbert, boldly; "but while I have a tongue to wag, it shall clamour for Queen Mary."

"Where are you going to bestow the prisoner?" inquired Gog from the foremost herald.

"In the guard-room," replied the man, "or some other place of security, till we learn his grace's pleasure."

"Bring him to the Stone Kitchen, then," returned Gog. "He will be as safe there as anywhere else, and you will be none the worse for a can of good liquor, and a slice of one of Dame Trusbut's notable pasties."

"Agreed;" rejoined the heralds, smiling; "bring him along."

While this was passing, Cholmondeley, whose impatience could brook no further delay, entreated Magog to conduct him

at once to the habitation of the fair Cicely. Informing him that it was close at hand, the giant opened a small postern on the left of the gateway leading to the western line of fortifications, and ascending a short spiral staircase, ushered his companion into a chamber, which, to this day, retains its name of the Stone Kitchen. It was a low, large room, with the ceiling supported by heavy rafters, and the floor paved with stone. The walls were covered with shelves, displaying a goodly assortment of pewter and wooden platters, dishes and drinking-vessels; the fire-place was wide enough to admit of a whole ox being roasted within its limits; the chimney-piece advanced several yards into the room, while beneath its comfortable shelter were placed a couple of benches on either side of the hearth, on which a heap of logs was now crackling. Amid the pungent smoke arising from the wood could be discerned, through the vast aperture of the chimney, sundry hams, gammons, dried tongues, and other savoury meats, holding forth a prospect of future good cheer. At a table running across the room, and furnished with flagons and pots of wine, several boon companions were seated. The chief of these was a jovial-looking warder who appeared to be the life and soul of the party, and who had a laugh, a joke, or the snatch of a song, for every occasion. Opposite to him sat Peter Trusbut, the pantler, who roared at every fresh witticism uttered by his guest till the tears ran down his cheeks. Nor did the warder appear to be less of a favourite with Dame Potentia, a stout buxom personage, a little on the wrong side of fifty, but not without some remains of comeliness. She kept his glass constantly filled with the best wine, and his plate as constantly supplied with the choicest viands, so that, what with eating, drinking, singing, and a little sly love-making to Dame Trusbut, Ribald, for so was the warder named, was pretty well employed. At the lower end of the table was placed a savage-looking person, with red blood-shot eyes and cadaverous countenance. This was Mauger, the headsman. He was engaged in earnest conversation with Master Hairun, the bearward, assistant-keeper of the lions, an office, at that time, of some consequence and emolument. In the ingle nook was ensconced a venerable old man with a snowy beard descending to his knees, who remained with his eyes fixed vacantly upon the blazing embers. Seated on a stool near the hearth, was a little boy playing with a dog, whom Cholmondeley perceived at once was Cicely's companion; while the adjoining chair was occupied by the fair creature of whom the enamoured esquire was in search. Pausing at the

doorway, he lingered for a moment to contemplate her charms. A slight shade of sadness clouded her brow—her eyes were fixed upon the ground, and she now and then uttered a half-repressed sigh. At this juncture, the jolly-looking warder struck up a Bacchanalian stave, the words of which ran as follows:—

With my back to the fire and my paunch to the table,
Let me eat, let me drink as long as I am able:
Let me eat, let me drink whate'er I set my whims on,
Until my nose is blue, and my jolly visage crimson.

The doctor preaches abstinence, and threatens me with dropsy,
But such advice, I needn't say, from drinking never stops ye:
The man who likes good liquor is of nature brisk and brave, boys,
So drink away! drink while you may! there's no drinking in the grave, boys!

"Well sung, my roystering Ribald," cried Magog, striding up to him, and delivering him a sounding blow on the back, "thou art ever merry, and hast the most melodious voice and the lustiest lungs of any man within the Tower."

"And thou hast the heaviest hand I ever felt on my shoulder, gigantic Magog," replied Ribald; "so we are even. But come, pledge me in a brimmer, and we will toss off a lusty measure to the health of our sovereign lady, Queen Jane. What say you, Master Trusbut? and you, good Hairun? and you, most melancholic Mauger? a cup of claret will bring the colour to your cheeks. A pot of wine, good dame, to drink the queen's health in. But whom have we yonder? Is that gallant thy companion, redoubted Magog?"

The giant nodded an affirmative.

"By my faith he is a well-looking youth," said Ribald; "but he seems to have eyes for no one excepting fair Mistress Cicely."

Aroused by this remark, the young damsel looked up and beheld the passionate gaze of Cholmondeley fixed upon her. She started, trembled, and endeavoured to hide her confusion by industriously pursuing her occupation of netting. But in spite of her efforts to restrain herself, she could not help stealing a sidelong glance at him; and emboldened by this slight encouragement, Cholmondeley ventured to advance towards her. It is scarcely necessary to detail the common-place gallantries which the youth addressed to her, or the monosyllabic answers which she returned to them. The language of love is best expressed by the look which accompanies the word, and the tone in which that word is uttered; and this language, though as yet neither party was much skilled in it, appeared perfectly

intelligible to both of them. Satisfied, at length, that she was not insensible to his suit, Cholmondeley drew nearer, and bending his head towards her, poured the most passionate protestations in her ear. What answer she made, if she made answer at all to these ardent addresses, we know not, but her heightened complexion and heaving bosom told that she was by no means insensible to them. Meanwhile, Og and Gog, together with the heralds and one or two men-at-arms, had entered the chamber with the prisoner. Much bustle ensued, and Dame Potentia was so much occupied with the new-comers and their wants, that she had little time to bestow upon her adoptive daughter. It is true that she thought the handsome stranger more attentive than was needful, or than she judged discreet, and she determined to take the earliest opportunity of putting a stop to the flirtation; but, just then, it happened that her hands were too full to allow her to attend to minor matters. As to Peter Trusbut, he was so much entertained with the pleasantries of his friend Ribald, and so full of the banquet he had provided for the queen, the principal dishes of which he recapitulated for the benefit of his guests, that he saw nothing whatever that was passing between the young couple. Not so a gloomy-looking personage shrouded behind the angle of the chimney, who, with his hand upon his dagger, bent eagerly forward to catch their lightest whisper. Two other mysterious individuals had also entered the room, and stationed themselves near the doorway. As soon as Dame Trusbut had provided for the wants of her numerous guests, she turned her attention to the prisoner, who had excited her compassion, and who sat with his arms folded upon his breast, preserving the same resolute demeanour he had maintained throughout. Proffering her services to the sufferer, she bade her attendant, Agatha, bring a bowl of water to bathe his wounds, and a fold of linen to bind round his head. At this moment, Xit, the dwarf, who was by no means pleased with the unimportant part he was compelled to play, bethought him of an expedient to attract attention. Borrowing from the herald the scroll of the proclamation, he mounted upon Og's shoulders, and begged him to convey him to the centre of the room, that he might read it aloud to the assemblage, and approve their loyalty. The good-humoured giant complied. Supporting the mannikin with his left hand, and placing his large two-handed sword over his right shoulder, he walked forward, while the dwarf screamed forth the following preamble to the proclamation:—" *Jane, by the grace of God Queen of England, France, and*

Ireland, Defender of the Faith, and of the Church of England, and also of Ireland, under Christ on earth the supreme head. To all our loving, faithful, and obedients, and to every of them, greeting." Here he paused to shout and wave his cap, while the herald, who had followed them, to humour the joke raised his embroidered trumpet to his lips, and blew a blast so loud and shrill, that the very rafters shook with it. To this clamour Og added his stunning laughter, while his brethren, who were leaning over a screen behind, and highly diverted with the incident, joined in lusty chorus. Almost deafened by the noise, Dame Trusbut, by way of putting an end to it, raised her own voice to its utmost pitch, and threatened to turn Xit, whom she looked upon as the principal cause of the disturbance, out of the house. Unfortunately, in her anger, she forgot that she was engaged in dressing the prisoner's wounds, and while her left hand was shaken menacingly at the dwarf, her right convulsively grasped the poor fellow's head, occasioning him such exquisite pain, that he added his outcries to the general uproar. The more Dame Trusbut scolded, the more Og and his brethren laughed, and the louder the herald blew his trumpet, so that it seemed as if there was no likelihood of tranquillity being speedily restored; nor, in all probability would it have been so without the ejectment of the dwarf, had it not been for the interference of Ribald, who at length, partly by cajolery, and partly by coercion, succeeded in pacifying the angry dame. During this tumult, the two mysterious personages, who, it has been stated, had planted themselves at the doorway, approached the young couple unobserved, and one of them, after narrowly observing the features of the young man, observed in an under-tone to his companion, "It *is* Cuthbert Cholmondeley. You doubted me, my Lord Pembroke, but I was assured it was Lord Guilford's favourite esquire, who had conveyed the note to his master, warning him of our scheme."

"You are right, M. Simon Renard," replied the earl. "I bow to your superior discernment."

"The young man is in possession of our secret," rejoined Renard, "and though we have intercepted the missive, he may yet betray us. He must not return to the palace."

"He never *shall* return, my lords," said a tall dark man, advancing towards them, "if you will entrust his detention to me."

"Who are you?" demanded Renard, eyeing him suspiciously.

"Lawrence Nightgall, the chief jailer of the Tower."

"What is your motive for this offer?" pursued Renard.

"Look there!" returned Nightgall. "I love that damsel."

"I see," replied Renard, smiling bitterly. "He has supplanted you."

"He has," rejoined Nightgall; "but he shall not live to profit by his good fortune."

"Hum!" said Renard, glancing at Cicely, "the damsel is lovely enough to ruin a man's soul. We will trust you."

"Follow me, then, without, my lords," replied Nightgall, "and I will convey him where he shall not cause further uneasiness to any of us. We have dungeons within the Tower, from which those who enter them seldom return."

"You are acquainted, no doubt, with the secret passages of the White Tower, friend?" asked Renard.

"With all of them," rejoined Nightgall. "I know every subterranean communication, every labyrinth, every hidden recess within the walls of the fortress, and there are many such; and can conduct you wherever you desire."

"You are the very man I want," cried Renard, rubbing his hands, gleefully. "Lead on."

And the trio quitted the chamber, without their departure being noticed.

Half an hour afterwards, as Cuthbert Cholmondeley issued from the postern with a heart elate with rapture at having elicited from the fair Cicely a confession that she loved him, he received a severe blow on the head from behind, and before he could utter a single outcry, he was gagged, and forced away by his assailants.

CHAPTER IV

OF THE MYSTERIOUS OCCURRENCE THAT HAPPENED TO QUEEN JANE IN SAINT JOHN'S CHAPEL IN THE WHITE TOWER

On that night Lord Guilford Dudley was summoned to a secret council by his father, the Duke of Northumberland, and as he had not returned at midnight, the Lady Hastings, who was in attendance upon the queen, proposed that, to while away the time, they should pay a visit to St. John's Chapel in the White Tower, of the extreme beauty of which they had all heard, though none of them had seen it. Jane assented to the proposal, and accompanied by her sister, the Lady Herbert, and the

planner of the expedition, Lady Hastings, she set forth. Two ushers led the way through the long galleries and passages which had to be traversed before they reached the White Tower; but on arriving at the room adjoining the council-chamber which had so lately been thronged with armed men, but which was now utterly deserted, Jane inquired from her attendants the way to the chapel, and on ascertaining it, commanded her little train to await her return there, as she had determined on entering the sacred structure alone. In vain her sisters remonstrated with her—in vain the ushers suggested that there might be danger in trusting herself in such a place at such an hour without protection—she remained firm, but promised to return in a few minutes, after which they could explore the chapel together.

Taking a lamp from one of the attendants, and pursuing the course pointed out to her, she threaded a narrow passage, similar to that she had traversed with the duke in the morning, and speedily entered upon the gallery above the chapel. As she passed through the opening in the wall leading to this gallery, she fancied she beheld the retreating figure of a man, muffled in a cloak, and she paused for a moment, half-inclined to turn back. Ashamed, however, of her irresolution, and satisfied that it was a mere trick of the imagination, she walked on. Descending a short spiral wooden staircase, she found herself within one of the aisles of the chapel, and passing between its columns, entered the body of the fane. For some time she was lost in admiration of this beautiful structure, which, in its style of architecture—the purest Norman—is without an equal. She counted its twelve massive and circular stone pillars, noted their various ornaments and mouldings, and admired their grandeur and simplicity. Returning to the northern aisle, she glanced at its vaulted roof, and was enraptured at the beautiful effect produced by the interweaving arches.

While she was thus occupied, she again fancied she beheld the same muffled figure she had before seen, glide behind one of the pillars. Seriously alarmed, she was now about to retrace her steps, when her eye rested upon an object lying at a little distance from her, on the ground. Prompted by an undefinable feeling of curiosity, she hastened towards it, and holding forward the light, a shudder ran through her frame, as she perceived at her feet *an axe!* It was the peculiarly-formed implement used by the headsman, and the edge was turned towards her.

At this moment, her lamp was extinguished.

CHAPTER V

OF THE MISUNDERSTANDING THAT AROSE BETWEEN QUEEN JANE AND HER HUSBAND, LORD GUILFORD DUDLEY

JANE not appearing, and some time having elapsed since her departure, her sisters, who were anxiously awaiting her return in the room adjoining the council-chamber, became so uneasy that, notwithstanding her injunctions to the contrary, they resolved to go in search of her. Accordingly, bidding the ushers precede them, they descended to the chapel; and their uneasiness was by no means decreased on finding it buried in darkness, and apparently empty. As they gazed around in perplexity and astonishment, a deep-drawn sigh broke from the northern aisle; and, hurrying in that direction, they discovered the object of their search, who had been hidden from view by the massive intervening pillars, extended upon a seat, and just recovering from a swoon into which she had fallen. Revived by their assiduities, Jane was soon able to speak, and the first thing she uttered was a peremptory order that no alarm should be given, or assistance sent for.

"I am now well—quite well," she said, with a look and in a tone that belied her words, "and require no further aid. Do not question me as to what has happened. My brain is too confused to think of it; and I would fain banish it altogether from my memory. Moreover, I charge you by your love and allegiance, that you mention to no one—not even to my dear lord and husband, should he interrogate you on the subject—how you have just found me. And if my visit here be not remarked by him, as is not unlikely, if he should remain closeted with the Duke of Northumberland, it is my will and pleasure that no allusion be made to the circumstance. You will not need to be told, dear sisters, that I have good reasons for thus imposing silence upon you. To you, sirs," she continued, addressing the ushers, who listened to her with the greatest surprise, "I also enjoin the strictest secrecy; and look well you observe it."

The solemn and mysterious manner in which the queen delivered her commands quite confounded her sisters, who glanced at each other as if they knew not what to think; but they readily promised compliance, as did the ushers. Supporting herself on the arm of Lady Herbert, Jane then arose, and

proceeded at a slow pace towards the eastern stair-case. As she was about to turn the corner of the aisle, she whispered to Lady Hastings, who walked on her left, "Look behind you, Catherine. Do you see nothing on the ground?"

"Nothing whatever, your highness," replied the other, glancing fearfully over her shoulder. "Nothing whatever, except the black and fantastic shadows of our attendants."

"Thank Heaven! it is gone," ejaculated Jane, as if relieved from a weight of anxiety.

"What is gone, dear sister?" inquired Lady Herbert, affectionately.

"Do not ask me," replied Jane, in a tone calculated to put an end to further conversation on the subject. "What I have seen and heard must for ever remain locked in my own bosom."

"I begin to think a spirit must have appeared to your majesty," observed Lady Herbert, whose curiosity was violently excited, and who, in common with most persons of the period, entertained a firm belief in supernatural appearances. "Every chamber in the Tower is said to be haunted, and why not this ghostly chapel, which looks as if it were peopled with phantoms? I am quite sorry I proposed to visit it. But if I am ever caught in it again, except in broad daylight, and then only with sufficient attendance, your majesty shall have free leave to send me to keep company with the invisible world for the future. I would give something to know what you have seen. Perhaps it was the ghost of Anne Boleyn, who is known to walk; or the guilty Catherine Howard, or the old Countess of Salisbury. Do tell me which it was, and whether the spectre carried its head under its arm?"

"No more of this," said Jane, authoritatively. "Come with me to the altar."

"Your majesty is not going to remain here?" cried Lady Hastings. "I declare positively *I* dare not stop."

"I will not detain you longer than will suffice to offer a single prayer to Heaven," rejoined the queen. "Be not afraid. Nothing will injure, or affright you."

"I am by no means sure of that," replied Lady Hastings. "And now I really *do* think I see something."

"Indeed!" exclaimed Jane, starting. "Where?"

"Behind the farthest pillar on the right," replied Lady Hastings, pointing towards it. "It looks like a man muffled in a cloak. There!—it moves."

"Go and see whether any one be lurking in the chapel," said

Jane to the nearest usher, and speaking in a voice so loud, that it almost seemed as if she desired to be overheard.

The attendant obeyed; and immediately returned with the intelligence that he could find no one.

"Your fears, you perceive, are groundless, Catherine," observed Jane, forcing a smile.

"Not altogether, I am persuaded, from your manner, my dear sister, and gracious mistress," rejoined Lady Hastings. "Oh! how I wish I was safe back again in the palace."

"So do I," added Lady Herbert.

"A moment's patience and I am ready," rejoined Jane.

With this, she approached the altar, and prostrated herself on the velvet cushion before it.

"Almighty Providence!" she murmured in a tone so low as to be inaudible to the others, "I humbly petition thee and supplicate thee, that if the kingdom that has been given me be rightly and lawfully mine, thou wilt grant me so much grace and spirit, that I may govern it to thy glory, service, and advantage. But if it be otherwise—if I am unlawfully possessed of it, and am an hindrance to one who might serve thee more effectually, remove, O Lord, the crown from my head, and set it on that of thy chosen servant! And if what I have this night beheld be a foreshadowing and a warning of the dreadful doom that awaits me, grant me, I beseech thee, strength to meet it with fortitude and resignation; so that my ending, like my life, may redound to thy honour, and the welfare of thy holy church."

While Jane was thus devoutly occupied, her sisters, who stood behind her, could scarcely control their uneasiness, but glanced ever and anon timorously round, as if in expectation of some fearful interruption. Their fears were speedily communicated to the ushers; and though nothing occurred to occasion fresh alarm, the few minutes spent by the queen in prayer appeared an age to her companions. There was something in the hour—it was past midnight—and the place, calculated to awaken superstitious terrors. The lights borne by the attendants only illumined a portion of the chapel; rendering that which was left in shadow yet more sombre; while the columned aisles on either side, and the deeply-recessed arches of the gallery above, were shrouded in gloom. Even in broad day, St. John's Chapel is a solemn and a striking spot; but at midnight, with its heavy, hoary pillars, reared around like phantoms, its effect upon the imagination will be readily conceived to be far greater.

Already described as one of the most perfect specimens of

Norman ecclesiastical architecture, this venerable structure, once used as a place of private worship by the old monarchs of England, and now as a receptacle for Chancery proceedings, has, from its situation in the heart of the White Tower, preserved, in an almost unequalled state, its original freshness and beauty; and, except that its floors are encumbered with cases, and its walls of Caen stone disfigured by a thick coat of white plaster, it is now much in the same state that it was at the period under consideration. It consists of a nave with broad aisles, flanked (as has been mentioned) by twelve circular pillars, of the simplest and most solid construction, which support a stone gallery of equal width with the aisles, and having an arcade corresponding with that beneath. The floor is now boarded, but was formerly covered with a hard polished cement, resembling red granite. The roof is coved, and beautifully proportioned; and the fane is completed by a semicircular termination towards the east.

Old Stow records the following order, given in the reign of Henry the Third, for its decoration: "And that ye cause the whole chapel of St. John the Evangelist to be whited. And that ye cause three glass windows in the same chapel to be made; to wit, one on the north side, with a certain little Mary holding her child; the other on the south part, with the image of the Trinity; and the third, of St. John the Apostle and Evangelist, in the south part. And that ye cause the cross and the beam beyond the altar of the same chapel to be painted well and with good colours. And that ye cause to be made and painted two fair images where more conveniently and decently they may be done in the same chapel; one of St. Edward, holding a ring, and reaching it out to St. John the Evangelist." These fair images—the cross, the rood, and the splendid illuminated window—are gone; most of them, indeed, were gone in Queen Jane's time, the royal worshippers are gone with them; but enough remains in its noble arcades, its vaulted aisles, and matchless columns, to place St. John's Chapel foremost in beauty of its class of architecture.

Her devotions over, Jane arose with a lighter heart, and, accompanied by her little train, quitted the chapel. On reaching her own apartments, she dismissed her attendants, with renewed injunctions of secrecy; and as Lord Guilford Dudley had not returned from the council, and she felt too much disturbed in mind to think of repose, she took from among the books on her table a volume of the divine Plato, whose Phædo, in the original tongue, she was wont, in the words of her famous instructor,

Roger Ascham, "to read with as much delight as some gentlemen would take in a merry tale of Boccace;" and was speedily lost in his profound and philosophic speculations.

In this way the greater part of the night was consumed; nor was it till near daybreak that she was aroused from her studies by the entrance of her husband.

"Jane, my beloved queen!" he exclaimed, hastening towards her with a countenance beaming with delight. "I have intelligence for you which will enchant you."

"Indeed! my dear lord," she replied, laying down her book, and rising to meet him. "What is it?"

"Guess," he answered, smiling.

"Nay, dear Dudley," she rejoined, "put me not to this trouble. Tell me at once your news, that I may participate in your satisfaction."

"In a word, then, my queen," replied Lord Guilford, "my father and the nobles propose to elevate me to the same dignity as yourself."

Jane's countenance fell.

"They have not the power to do so, my lord," she rejoined gravely; "I, alone, can thus elevate you."

"Then I am king," cried Dudley, triumphantly.

"My lord," observed Jane, with increased gravity, "you will pardon me if I say I must consider of this matter."

"Consider of it!" echoed her husband, frowning; "I must have your decision at once. You can have no hesitation, since my father desires it. I am your husband, and claim your obedience."

"And I, my lord," rejoined Jane, with dignity, "am your queen; and, as such, it is for me, not you, to exact obedience. We will talk no further on the subject."

"As you please, madam," replied Lord Guilford, coldly. "To-morrow you will learn the duke's pleasure."

"When I do so, he shall know mine," rejoined Jane.

"How is this?" exclaimed Dudley, gazing at her in astonishment. "Can it be possible you are the same Jane whom I left —all love, all meekness, all compliance?—or have a few hours of rule so changed your nature that you no longer love me as heretofore?"

"Dudley," returned Jane, tenderly, "you are dear to me as ever; and if I accede not to your wishes, do not impute it to other than the right motive. As a queen, I have duties paramount to all other considerations—duties which, so long as I *am*

queen, I will fulfil to the best of my ability, and at every personal sacrifice. Be not wholly guided by the counsels of your father, be not dazzled by ambition. The step you propose is fraught with danger. It may cost me my crown, and cannot ensure one to you."

"Enough," replied her husband, apparently convinced by her arguments. "We will postpone its further consideration till to-morrow."

When that morrow came, Dudley's first business was to seek his father, and acquaint him with the manner in which his communication to the queen had been received. The haughty duke appeared surprised, but imputed the failure to his son's mismanagement, and undertook to set it right. With this view, he repaired to the queen's apartments, and on obtaining an audience, informed her that he and the lords of the council had resolved to place her husband on the throne beside her. Her answer differed in nothing from that which she had returned to Lord Guilford, except that it was couched in a firmer tone; but it had this addition, that she was well aware of his grace's object in the proposal, which was, in effect, to obtain possession of the supreme power. In vain arguments, entreaties, and even threats, were used by the duke: Jane continued inflexible. Northumberland was succeeded by his no less imperious spouse, who, with all the insolence of her arrogant nature, rated her daughter-in-law soundly, and strove to terrify her into compliance. But she, too, failed; and Lord Guilford was so enraged at his consort's obstinacy, that he quitted the Tower, and departed for Sion House, without even taking leave of her.

Perplexed as he felt by Jane's conduct, Northumberland was too well versed in human nature not to be aware that a character however soft and pliant may, by the sudden alteration of circumstances, be totally changed, but he was by no means prepared for such a remarkable display of firmness as Jane had exhibited. The more he considered the matter, the more satisfied he became that she had some secret counsellor, under whose guidance she acted, and with the view of finding out who it was, he resolved to have all her motions watched. No one appeared so well fitted to this office as his daughter, the Lady Hastings; and sending for her, he extracted from her, in the course of conversation, all particulars with which she was acquainted of the mysterious occurrence in St. John's Chapel. This information filled Northumberland with new surprise, and convinced him that he had more to dread than he at first

imagined, and that the schemes of his enemies must be in full operation. His suspicions fell upon Simon Renard, though he scarcely knew how to connect him with this particular occurrence. Dismissing his daughter with full instructions for the part he desired her to play, he continued for some time brooding over the mystery, and vainly trying to unravel it. At one time he resolved to interrogate Jane; but the reception he had recently experienced induced him to adopt a different and more cautious course. His thoughts, however, were soon diverted from the subject by the onerous duties that pressed upon him. Amongst other distractions, not the least was the arrival of a messenger with the intelligence that Mary had retired from Kenninghall in Norfolk, whither he had despatched a body of men to surprise her, and retreated to a more secure post, Framlingham Castle; that she had been proclaimed in Norwich, and that her party was hourly gaining strength in all quarters. Ill news seldom comes alone, and the proud duke experienced the truth of the adage. Other messengers brought word that the Earls of Bath, Sussex, and Oxford, Lord Wentworth, Sir Thomas Cornwallis, Sir Henry Jerningham, and other important personages, had declared themselves in her favour.

While he was debating upon the best means of crushing this danger in the bud, a page from Lady Hastings suddenly presented himself, and informed him that the queen was at that moment engaged in deep conference with M. Simon Renard, in St. Peter's Chapel. On inquiry, the duke learned that Jane, who had been greatly disturbed in mind since her husband's departure, had proceeded to St. Peter's Chapel (a place of worship situated at the north end of the Tower Green, and appropriated to the public devotions of the court and household) accompanied by her mother, the Duchess of Suffolk, and her sisters, the Ladies Herbert and Hastings; and that the train had been joined by the Earls of Pembroke and Arundel, De Noailles, and Simon Renard—the latter of whom, when the queen's devotions were ended, had joined her. Tarrying for no further information, the duke summoned his attendants, and hastened to the Tower Green. Entering the chapel, he found the information he had received was correct. The wily ambassador was standing with the queen before the altar.

CHAPTER VI

OF THE SOLEMN EXHORTATION PRONOUNCED TO THE GIANTS BY MASTER EDWARD UNDERHILL, THE "HOT-GOSPELLER," AT THEIR LODGING IN THE BY-WARD TOWER; AND OF THE EFFECT PRODUCED THEREBY

In spite of the interruption occasioned by the dwarf, the evening at the Stone Kitchen passed off pleasantly enough. Dame Potentia was restored to good humour by the attentions of the jovial warder, and the giants in consequence were regaled with an excellent and plentiful supper, of which Xit was permitted to partake. Whether it was that their long fasting, or their attendance at the state banquet, had sharpened the appetites of the three gigantic brethren, or that the viands set before them were of a more tempting nature than ordinary, we pretend not to say, but certain it is that their prodigious performances at the table excited astonishment from all who witnessed them, and elicited the particular approbation of Ribald, who, being curious to ascertain how much they *could* eat, insisted on helping them to everything on the board, and, strange to say, met with no refusal.

With the profuse hospitality of the period, all the superfluities of the royal feast were placed at the disposal of the household; and it may therefore be conceived that Peter Trusbut's table was by no means scantily furnished. Nor was he disposed to stint his guests. Several small dishes which had been set before them having disappeared with marvellous celerity, he called for the remains of a lordly baron of beef, which had recently graced the royal sideboard. At the sight of this noble joint, Og, who had just appropriated a dish of roast quails, two of which he despatched at a mouthful, uttered a grunt of intense satisfaction, and abandoning the trifling dainties of Xit, prepared for the more substantial fare.

Assuming the part of carver, Peter Trusbut sliced off huge wedges of the meat, and heaped the platters of the giants with more than would have satisfied men of ordinary appetites. But this did not satisfy them. They came again and again. The meat was of such admirable quality, so well roasted, so full of gravy, and the fat was so exquisite, that they could not sufficiently praise it, nor do it sufficient justice. The knife was

never out of Peter Trusbut's hands; nor was he allowed to remain idle a moment. Scarcely had he helped Og, when Gog's plate was empty; and before Gog had got his allowance, Magog was bellowing for more. And so it continued as long as a fragment remained upon the bones.

Puffing with the exertion he had undergone, the pantler then sat down, while Ribald, resolved not to be balked of his pastime, entreated Dame Potentia to let her guests wash down their food with a measure of metheglin. After some little solicitation, she complied, and returned with a capacious jug containing about three gallons of the balmy drink. The jug was first presented to Magog. Raising it to his lips, he took a long and stout pull, and then passed it to Gog, who detained it some seconds, drew a long breath, and returned it to Dame Trusbut, perfectly empty. By dint of fresh entreaties from the warder, Dame Potentia was once more induced to seek the cellar; and, on receiving the jug, Og took care to leave little in it for his brethren, but poured out what was left into a beaker for Xit.

They were now literally "giants refreshed;" and Peter Trusbut, perceiving that they still cast wistful glances towards the larder, complied with a significant wink from Ribald, and went in search of further provisions. This time he brought the better half of a calvered salmon, a knuckle of Westphalia ham, a venison pasty with a castellated crust of goodly dimensions, a larded capon, and the legs and carcass of a peacock, decorated with a few feathers from the tail of that gorgeous bird. Magog, before whom the latter dainty was placed, turned up his nose at it, and giving it to Xit, vigorously assaulted the venison pasty. It soon became evident that the board would again be speedily cleared; and though he had no intention of playing the niggardly host on the present occasion, Peter Trusbut declared that this was the last time such valiant trenchermen should ever feed at his cost. But his displeasure was quickly dispelled by the mirth of the warder, who laughed him out of his resolution, and encouraged the giants to proceed by every means in his power. Og was the first to give in. Throwing back his huge frame on the bench, he seized a flask of wine that stood near him, emptied it into a flagon, tossed it off at a draught, and declared he had had enough. Gog soon followed his example. But Magog seemed insatiable, and continued actively engaged, to the infinite diversion of Ribald, and the rest of the guests.

There was one person to whom this festive scene afforded no amusement. This was the fair Cicely. After Cholmondeley's departure—though wholly unacquainted with what had befallen him—she lost all her sprightliness, and could not summon up a smile, though she blushed deeply when rallied by the warder. In surrendering her heart at the first summons of the enamoured esquire, Cicely had obeyed an uncontrollable impulse; but she was by no means satisfied with herself for her precipitancy. She felt that she ought to have resisted rather than have yielded to a passion which, she feared, could have no happy result; and though her admirer had vowed eternal constancy, and pleaded his cause with all the eloquence and fervour of deep and sincere devotion—an eloquence which seldom falls ineffectually on female ears—she was not so unacquainted with the ways of the world as to place entire faith in his professions. But it was now too late to recede. Her heart was no longer her own; and if her lover had deceived her, and feigned a passion which he did not feel, she had no help for it, but to love on unrequited.

While her bosom alternately fluttered with hope, or palpitated with fear, and her hands mechanically pursued their employment, she chanced to raise her eyes, and beheld the sinister gaze of Lawrence Nightgall fixed upon her. There was something in his malignant look that convinced her he read what was passing in her breast, and there was a bitter and exulting smile on his lip which, while it alarmed her on her account, terrified her (she knew not why) for her lover.

"You are thinking of the young esquire who left you an hour ago," he observed sarcastically.

"I will not attempt to deny it," replied Cicely, colouring; "I am."

"I knew it," rejoined the jailer; "and he dared to tell you he loved you?"

Cicely made no reply.

"And you? what answer did you give him, mistress?" continued Nightgall, furiously grasping her arm. "What answer did you give him, I say?"

"Let me go," cried Cicely. "You hurt me dreadfully. I will not be questioned thus."

"I overheard what you said to him," rejoined the jailer. "You told him that you loved him—that you had loved no other, and would wed no other."

"I told him the truth," exclaimed Cicely. "I do love him, and will wed him."

"It is false," cried Nightgall, laughing maliciously. "You will never see him again."

"How know you that?" she cried in alarm.

"He has left the Tower — for ever," returned the jailer, moodily.

"Impossible!" cried Cicely. "The Duke of Northumberland has given orders that no one shall go forth without a pass. Besides, he told me he was returning to the palace."

"I tell you he is gone," thundered Nightgall. "Hear me, Cicely," he continued, passionately. "I have loved you long—desperately. I would give my life, my soul, for you. Do not cast me aside for this vain court-gallant, who pursues you only to undo you. He would never wed you."

"He has sworn to do so," replied Cicely.

"Indeed!" cried Nightgall, grinding his teeth, "The oath will never be kept. Cicely, you must, you *shall* be mine."

"Never!" replied the maiden. "Do you suppose I would unite myself to one whom I hate, as I do you?"

"Hate me!" cried the jailer, grasping her arm with such force that she screamed with pain. "Do you dare to tell me so to my face?"

"I do," she rejoined. "Release me, monster!"

"Body of my father! what's the matter?" roared Magog, who was sitting near them. "Leave go your hold of the damsel, Master Nightgall," he added, laying down his knife and fork.

"Not at your bidding, you overgrown ox!" replied the jailer.

"We'll see that," replied the giant. And stretching out his hand, he seized him by the nape of the neck, and drew him forcibly backwards.

"You shall bleed for this, caitiff!" exclaimed Nightgall, disengaging himself, and menacing him with his poniard.

"Tush!" rejoined Magog, contemptuously, and instantly disarming him. "Your puny weapon will serve me for a tooth-pick," he added, suiting the action to the word. And, amid the loud laughter of the assemblage, the jailer slunk away, muttering interjections of rage and vengeance.

Nightgall's dark hints respecting Cholmondeley were not without effect upon Cicely, who, well aware of his fierce and revengeful character, could not help fearing some evil; and when he quitted the Stone Kitchen, an undefinable impulse prompted her to follow him. Hastily descending the stairs, on gaining the postern she descried him hurrying along the road

between the ballium wall and the external line of fortifications, and instantly decided on following him.

On reaching the projecting walls of the Beauchamp Tower, behind which she sheltered herself, she saw that he stopped midway between that fortification and the next turret, then known as the Devilin, or Robin the Devil's Tower, but more recently, from having been the prison of the unfortunate Earl of Essex, as the Devereux Tower. Here he disappeared. Hastening to the spot, Cicely looked for the door, through which he must have passed; and after some little search, discovered it. Pushing against it, it yielded to the pressure, and admitted her to a low passage, evidently communicating with some of the subterranean dungeons which she knew existed under this part of the fortress.

She had scarcely set foot within this passage, when she perceived the jailer returning; and had barely time to conceal herself behind an angle of the wall, when he approached the spot where she stood. In his haste he had forgotten to lock the door, and he now, with muttered execrations, hastened to repair his error; cutting off by this means the possibility of Cicely's retreat. And here, for the present, it will be necessary to leave her, and return to the Stone Kitchen.

The attention which must otherwise have been infallibly called to Cicely's disappearance was diverted by the sudden entrance of a very singular personage, whose presence served somewhat to damp the hilarity of the party. This was Master Edward Underhill, a man of some ability, but of violent religious opinions, who, having recently been converted to the new doctrines, became so zealous in their support and propagation, that he obtained among his companions the nickname of the "Hot-gospeller." He was a tall thin man, with sandy hair, and a scanty beard of the same colour. His eyes were blear and glassy, with pink lids utterly devoid of lashes, and he had a long lantern-shaped visage. His attire was that of a gentleman-pensioner.

Rebuking the assemblage for their unseemly mirth, and mounting upon a stool, Master Underhill would fain have compelled them to listen to a discourse on the necessity of extirpating papacy and idolatry from the land, but he was compelled, by the clamour which his exordium occasioned, to desist. He was, moreover, brought down, with undue precipitation, from his exalted position by Xit, who, creeping under the stool, contrived to overset it, and prostrated the Gospeller on

the floor, to the infinite entertainment of the guests, and the no small damage of his nose.

This incident, though received in good part even by the principal sufferer, served to break up the party. Apprehensive of some further disturbance, and not without fears that the giants might indulge as freely with the fluids as they had done with the solids, Dame Trusbut took advantage of the occurrence to dismiss her guests, which she did without much ceremony.

It was then for the first time that she noticed the absence of Cicely. Not being able to find her, the recollection of the handsome esquire, and of the attention he had paid her, rushed to her mind; and with a dreadful foreboding of impending misery, she despatched her husband to the palace to make inquiries after him; while she herself went to the gate—to the ramparts—everywhere, in short, that she thought it likely she could gain any information — but everywhere without success.

The giants, meanwhile, with Xit, betook themselves to their lodging in the By-ward Tower. The herald and the men-at-arms, who, it may be remembered, had charge of the prisoner Gilbert, not having received any further instructions respecting him, accompanied them thither. They were also attended by Master Edward Underhill, who was bent upon admonishing them, having been given to understand they were relapsing into papacy.

Arrived at the entrance of the By-ward Tower, the giants volunteered to take charge of the prisoner till the morning, an offer which was gladly accepted by the herald, who, intrusting him to their care, departed. But the Gospeller was not to be got rid of so easily. He begged to be admitted, and, partly by entreaties, partly by a bribe to the dwarf, succeeded in his object. The first care of the giants, on entering their abode—an octagonal chamber of stone, about sixteen feet wide, and twenty high, with a vaulted ceiling, supported by sharp groined arches of great beauty, springing from small slender columns—was to light a candle placed in front of an ancient projecting stone fire-place. Their next was to thrust the prisoner into the arched embrasure of a loop-hole at one side of it.

The walls of the chamber were decorated with the arms and accoutrements of the gigantic brethren, the size of which would have been sufficient to strike any chance-beholder with wonder. Over the embrasure in which they had placed the prisoner, hung an enormous pair of gauntlets, and a morion of equal size.

Here was a quiver full of arrows, each shaft far exceeding a cloth-yard in length—there a formidable club, armed with sharp steel spikes; while the fire-place was garnished with a couple of immense halberts. Having drawn a large pot of wine, which they first offered to their guest, who refused it, they each took a deep draught; and informing Underhill, if he was still resolved to hold forth, he had better commence without further delay, they disposed themselves to listen to him.

Placing a small table in the centre of the chamber, Og seated himself opposite it, and took Xit upon his knee; while Gog sat down beside him, and Magog supported his huge bulk against the wall. Divesting himself of his cap and sword, and placing an hour-glass on the table, the Hot-gospeller then opened a small volume, which he took from beneath his cloak; from which he began to read certain passages and to comment upon them in a vehement tone. His exhortation opened with a burst of rejoicing on the accession of Queen Jane, in which he pronounced terrible anathemas against all those who sought to restore the fallen religion. Perceiving the fierce gaze of the prisoner fixed upon him, he directed his chief thunders against him, and, excited by his subject, soon worked himself into a state approaching to frenzy.

In this strain he continued for some time, when a sound arose which drowned even his vehemence. Overcome with drowsiness, the three giants, who for a short time vainly endeavoured to attend to the discourse of the Gospeller, had now sunk into a comfortable slumber, and the noise which they made was tremendous. In vain Underhill endeavoured to rouse them by thumping the table. Gog gazed at him for an instant with half-shut eyes, and then leaning on Og's shoulder, who, with head dropped back and mouth wide open, was giving audible proof of his insensible condition, he speedily dropped asleep again. Such was the astounding din, that the Gospeller could not even make himself heard by the dwarf, who, perched on Og's knee at a few paces' distance, stared in amazement at his gesticulations.

More than an hour having passed in this manner, the Hot-gospeller, whose energies were wholly exhausted, came to a pause; and after menacing his insensible audience with proportionate punishment in the next world—especially the idolatrous prisoner, whom he threatened with gesture as well as with word—he closed his volume, and prepared to depart. With some difficulty the three giants were awakened; and it was only by

the assistance of Xit, who tweaked their noses and plucked their beards, that this could be accomplished.

Just as Master Underhill was taking his leave, Dame Trusbut arrived in the greatest tribulation. The fair Cicely was nowhere to be found. Her husband had been to the palace. Nothing could be heard of the young esquire; nor could Lawrence Nightgall be met with. In this emergency, she had come to entreat the giants to aid her in her search. They agreed to go at once, and Xit was delighted with the prospect of such employment. Accordingly, the door was locked upon the prisoner, and they set forth with the distracted dame.

As soon as he was left alone, Gilbert surveyed the chamber to see if there was any means by which he might effect his escape. An idea speedily occurred to him: by the help of one of the halberts he contrived to free himself from his bonds, and then clambered up the chimney.

CHAPTER VII

HOW CUTHBERT CHOLMONDELEY WAS THROWN INTO A DUNGEON NEAR THE DEVILIN TOWER; AND HOW A MYSTERIOUS FEMALE FIGURE APPEARED TO HIM THERE

On recovering from the stunning effects of the blow he had received, Cuthbert Cholmondeley found himself stretched on the floor of a gloomy vault, or dungeon, for such he judged it. At first, he thought he must be dreaming, and tried to shake off the horrible nightmare by which he supposed himself oppressed. But a moment's reflection undeceived him; and starting to his feet, he endeavoured to explore the cell in which he was confined. A heavy chain, which bound his leg to the floor, prevented him from moving more than a few paces; and, convinced that escape was impossible, he sank upon the ground in despair.

Unable to assign any cause for his imprisonment, and wholly at a loss to imagine what offence he had committed, he taxed his brain as to everything that had recently happened to him. This naturally directed his thoughts to the fair Cicely, and with her gentle image came the recollection of the malicious countenance and threatening gestures of Lawrence Nightgall. Remembering what Magog had told him of the jealousy and vindictive nature of this person, and remembering also that he had heard him described as the chief jailer, he felt that he

need seek no further for the motive and the author of his imprisonment.

The assurance, however, which he had thus gained, afforded him no consolation, but rather tended to increase his disquietude. If he had been a prisoner of state, he might have hoped for eventual release; but placed in the hands of so remorseless and unscrupulous an enemy as Nightgall had shown himself, he felt he had little to hope. This consideration filled him with anguish, which was heightened as he thought of the triumph of his savage rival, who by some means—for he seemed desperate enough to have recourse to any expedient—might possess himself of the object of his passion. Fired by this thought, Cholmondeley again sprang to his feet, and strove with all his force to burst his bondage. But the effort was fruitless; and by lacerating his hands, and straining his limbs, he only added bodily torture to his mental suffering. Exhausted at length, he sank once more upon the floor.

By this time, having become habituated to the gloom of the place, he fancied he could make out that it was an arched cell of a few feet in width, and corresponding height. The only light admitted was from the entrance, which appeared to open upon a passage branching off on the left, and upon a further range of dungeons extending in the same direction.

Not altogether unacquainted with the prisons of the Tower, Cholmondeley felt against the walls to try whether he could find any of those melancholy memorials which their unfortunate inmates delighted to bequeath to their successors, and which might serve as a clue to the particular place of his confinement. But nothing but the smooth surface of the stone met his touch. This circumstance, however, and the peculiar form of the cell, induced him to think that it must be situated beneath, or at no great distance from the Devilin Tower, as he had heard of a range of subterranean dungeons in that quarter: and, it may be added, he was right in his conjecture.

The cell in which he was thrown was part of a series of such dreadful receptacles, contrived in the thickness of the ballium wall, and extending from the Beauchamp Tower to the Devilin Tower. They were appropriated to those prisoners who were doomed to confinement for life.

Horrible recollections then flashed upon his mind of the dreadful sufferings he had heard that the miserable wretches immured in these dungeons underwent—how some were tortured, some destroyed by secret and expeditious means,

others by the more lingering process of starvation. As the latter idea crossed him, he involuntarily stretched out his hand to ascertain whether any provisions has been left him; but he could find none.

The blood froze in his veins as he thought of dying thus; his hair stiffened upon his head; and he was only prevented from crying out to make his lamentable case known to the occupants of any of the adjoining cells, by the conviction of its utter futility. But this feeling passed away, and was succeeded by calmer and more consolatory reflections. While in this frame of mind, Nature asserted her sway, and he dropped asleep.

How long he remained thus, he knew not; but he was awakened by a loud and piercing scream. Raising himself, he listened intently. The scream was presently repeated in a tone so shrill and unearthly, that it filled him with apprehensions of a new kind. The outcry having been a third time raised, he was debating within himself whether he should in any way reply to it, when he thought he beheld a shadowy figure glide along the passage. It paused at a short distance from him. A glimmer of light fell upon the arch on the left, but the place where the figure stood was buried in darkness. After gazing for some time at the mysterious visitant, and passing his hand across his brow to assure himself that his eyesight did not deceive him, Cholmondeley summoned courage enough to address it. No answer was returned; but the figure, which had the semblance of a female, with the hands raised and clasped together as if in supplication or prayer, and with a hood drawn over the face, remained perfectly motionless. Suddenly, it glided forward, but with a step so noiseless and swift, that almost before the esquire was aware of the movement, it was at his side. He then felt a hand cold as marble placed upon his own, and upon grasping the fingers they appeared so thin and bony, that he thought he must have encountered a skeleton. Paralysed with fright, Cholmondeley shrunk back as far as he was able; but the figure pursued him, and shrieked in his ear, "My child, my child!—you have taken my child!"

Convinced from the voice that he had a being of this world to deal with, the esquire seized her vestment, and resolved to detain her till he had ascertained who she was and what was the cause of her cries; but just as he had begun to question her, a distant footstep was heard, and, uttering a loud shriek, and crying, "He comes!—he comes!"—the female broke from him and disappeared.

Fresh shrieks were presently heard in a more piteous tone than before, mixed with angry exclamations in a man's voice, which Cholmondeley fancied sounded like that of Nightgall. A door was next shut with great violence; and all became silent.

While he was musing on this strange occurrence, Cholmondeley heard footsteps advancing along the passage on the left, and in another moment Lawrence Nightgall stood before him.

The jailer, who carried a lamp, eyed the captive for a few moments in silence, and with savage satisfaction.

"It is to you, then, I owe my imprisonment, villain," said Cholmondeley, regarding him sternly.

"It is," replied the jailer; "and you can readily conjecture, I doubt not, why I have thus dealt with you."

"I can," resumed the esquire; "your jealousy prompted you to the deed. But you shall bitterly rue it."

"Bah!" exclaimed Nightgall. "You are wholly in my power. I am not, however, come to threaten, but to offer you freedom."

"On what terms?" demanded Cholmondeley.

"On these," replied the jailer, scowling, "that you swear to abandon Cicely."

"Never!" replied the esquire.

"Then your fate is sealed," rejoined Nightgall. "You shall never quit this spot."

"Think not to move me by any such idle threat," returned Cholmondeley. "You dare not detain me."

"Who shall prevent me?" laughed the jailer, scornfully. "I, alone, possess the key of these dungeons. You are their sole occupant."

"That is false," retorted the esquire. "There is another captive—a miserable female—whom I, myself, have seen."

"Has she been here?" cried Nightgall, with a look of disquietude.

"Not many minutes since," replied the other, fixing a scrutinising glance upon him. "She came in search of her child. What have you done with it, villain?"

Cholmondeley had no particular object in making the inquiry. But he was astonished at the effect produced by it on the jailer, who started and endeavoured to hide his confusion by pulling his cap over his brows.

"She is a maniac," he said, at length, in a hoarse voice.

"If it be so," rejoined the esquire, severely; "she has been

driven out of her senses by your barbarous usage. I more than suspect you have murdered her child."

"Entertain what suspicions you please," replied Nightgall, evidently relieved by the surmise. "I am not accountable for the ravings of a distracted woman."

"Who is she?" demanded the esquire.

"The names of those confined within these cells are never divulged," returned the jailer. "She has been a prisoner of state for nineteen years."

"And during that term her child was born—ha?" pursued Cholmondeley.

"I will answer no further questions," replied Nightgall, doggedly. "One word before I depart. I am not your only enemy. You have others more powerful, and equally implacable. You have incurred the displeasure of the privy council, and I have a warrant, under the hands of its chief members, for your execution. I am now about to summon the headsman for the task."

"Then your offer to liberate me was mere mockery," observed the esquire.

"Not so," replied the other; "and I again repeat it. Swear to abandon Cicely, and to maintain profound silence as to what you have just seen, and I will convey you by a secret passage underneath the Tower moat to a place of security, where you will be beyond the reach of your enemies, and will take the risk of your escape upon myself. Do you agree to this?"

"No," replied Cholmondeley, firmly. "I distrust your statement, and defy your malice."

"Obstinate fool!" growled the jailer. "Prepare to meet your fate in an hour."

"Whenever it comes it will find me prepared," rejoined the esquire.

Nightgall glared at him fiercely for a moment from beneath his shaggy brows. He then strode sullenly away. But his departure was prevented by Cicely, who suddenly appeared at the mouth of the dungeon.

"You here!" he exclaimed recoiling, and trembling as if an apparition had crossed his path. "How have you obtained admittance?"

"It matters not," she answered. "I am come to purchase your prisoner's freedom."

"You know the terms?" rejoined the jailer, eagerly.

"I do," she replied; "and will comply with them when you have fulfilled your share of the compact."

"Cicely!" cried Cholmondeley, who had been to the full as much astonished at her unexpected appearance as the jailer, "Cicely!" he cried, starting to his feet, and extending his hands towards her. "Do not consent to his proposal. Do not sacrifice yourself for me. I would die a thousand deaths rather than you should be his."

"Heed him not," interposed Nightgall, grasping her arm, and preventing her from approaching her lover; "but attend to me. You see this warrant," he added, producing a parchment. "It is from the council, and directs that the prisoner's execution shall take place in such manner as may best consist with despatch and secrecy. If I deliver it to Mauger, the headsman, it will be promptly obeyed. And I *shall* deliver it, unless you promise compliance."

"The villain deceives you, dear Cicely," cried Cholmondeley, in a voice of anguish. "The council have not the power of life and death. They cannot—dare not—order my execution without form or trial."

"The council will answer for their actions themselves," rejoined Nightgall, carelessly. "Their warrant will bear me and my comrades harmless. Mauger will not hesitate to act upon it. What is your determination, Cicely?"

"Free him," she replied.

"Recall your words, sweet Cicely," cried Cholmondeley, throwing himself at her feet, "if you have any love for me. You doom me to worse than death by this submission."

"Cholmondeley," she replied in a mournful voice, "my resolution is taken, and even you cannot induce me to change it. The opening of our love has been blighted. My heart has been crushed, almost before it knew for whom it beat. It matters not now what becomes of me. If my life could preserve yours, or restore you to freedom, I would freely yield it. But as nothing will suffice except my hand, I give that. Think of me no more, or think of me only as another's."

"That thought were madness!" groaned Cholmondeley.

"Master Lawrence Nightgall," continued Cicely, "you say you can conduct the prisoner beyond the walls of the Tower. Bring me back some token that you have done so, and I am yours."

"Willingly," replied the jailer.

"Retire then for a moment, while I arrange with him what the token shall be."

Nightgall hesitated.

"Refuse, and I retract my promise," she added.

And the jailer, with a suspicious look, reluctantly left the cell.

"Cicely, my beloved," cried Cholmondeley, clasping her in his arms, "why—why have you done this?"

"To preserve you," she replied, hurriedly. "Once out of this dungeon, I can bring assistance to liberate you."

"Indeed!" ejaculated Nightgall, who, having placed his ear to the wall, lost not a syllable of their discourse.

"It will be unavailing," replied Cholmondeley. "No one will venture to oppose an order of the council. You must make known my case to Lord Guilford Dudley. Take this ring. Explain all to him, and I may yet be saved. Do you hear me, Cicely?"

"I do," she replied.

"And I," added Nightgall.

"In case you fail," continued the esquire, "the token of my escape shall be"—and placing his lips close to her ear, he spoke a few words in so low a tone, that they escaped the jailer. "Till you receive that token treat Nightgall as before."

"Doubt it not," she answered.

"I am content," said the esquire.

"I see through the design," muttered the jailer, "and will defeat it. Have you done?" he added, aloud.

"A moment," replied Cholmondeley, again pressing the damsel to his bosom, "I would sooner part with my life's blood than resign you."

"I must go," she cried, disengaging herself from his embrace.

"Now, Master Nightgall, I am ready to attend you."

"In an hour I shall return and release you," said the jailer, addressing the prisoner. "Your hand, Cicely."

"I will go alone," she replied, shrinking from him with a look of abhorrence.

"As you please," he rejoined, with affected carelessness. "You are mine."

"Not till I have received the token. Farewell!" she murmured, turning her tearful gaze upon Cholmondeley.

"For ever!" exclaimed the youth.

And as they quitted the cell, he threw himself despairingly on the ground.

Issuing from the outer door of the dungeon, Cicely and her companion took their way towards the Stone Kitchen. They had not proceeded far, when they perceived several persons

approaching them, who, as they drew nearer, proved to be Dame Potentia, Xit, and the giants.

"What have you been doing, Cicely?" inquired her adoptive mother, angrily. "I have been searching for you everywhere!'

"You shall know anon," replied the maiden. "But come with me to the palace. I must see Lord Guilford Dudley, or the Duke of Northumberland, without a moment's delay."

"Warders," interposed Nightgall, authoritatively: "go to Master Mauger's lodging in the Bloody Tower. Bid him hasten with two assistants, and the sworn tormentor, to the dungeon beneath the Devilin Tower. He will know which I mean. Justice is about to be done upon a prisoner."

"Oh no—no—do not go," cried Cicely, arresting the giants. "He does not mean it. He is jesting."

"Go home, then, and do not stir forth till I bring you the token," rejoined Nightgall, in a deep whisper.

"In Heaven's name, what is the meaning of all this?" cried Dame Potentia, in amazement.

"I will inform you," replied the jailer, drawing her aside. "Your daughter was about to elope with the young esquire. I detected them trying to escape by the secret passage beneath the moat, of which you know I have the key. Lock her within her chamber. Pay no attention to her tears, entreaties, or assertions. And, above all, take care no one has any communication with her."

"Trust me to guard her," rejoined Dame Potentia. "I know what these court-gallants are. They will venture anything, and contrive anything, when a pretty girl is concerned. But what has happened to the esquire?"

"He is safe for the present," answered Nightgall, significantly.

Cicely, meantime, had availed herself of their conversation, to whisper a few words to Xit.

"Take this ring," she said, placing the ornament given her by her lover, in the hands of the dwarf, "and fly to the palace. Show it to Lord Guilford Dudley, and say that the wearer is imprisoned in the dungeons beneath the Devilin Tower. Assistance must be speedily rendered, as he is ordered for immediate and secret execution. Do you understand?"

"Most precisely, lovely damsel," replied Xit, kissing her hand, as he took the ring; "and I guess the name and condition of the prisoner, as well as the nature of the interest you take in him."

"Fly!" interrupted Cicely. "Not a moment is to be lost. You shall be well rewarded for your trouble."

"I desire no higher reward than your thanks, adorable maiden," replied Xit. "Your behests shall be punctually obeyed." So saying, he disappeared.

"Come, young mistress," cried Dame Potentia, seizing her adoptive daughter's arm, "you must to your chamber. You have led me and your father, and these worthy warders, a pretty dance. But you shall lead us all where you list, if I let you out of my sight in future."

And thanking the giants, who had looked on in speechless astonishment, she dragged Cicely along with her.

"Remember!" whispered Nightgall, as he walked a few paces by the side of the latter.

"I shall expect the token in an hour," she answered in the same tone.

"You shall have it," he rejoined.

With this, he halted, and retraced his steps. The others then separated. Cicely was conveyed to the Stone Kitchen; and the giants, after looking in vain for Xit, and calling to him repeatedly but without effect, returned to the By-ward Tower. Just as they reached it, a shot was fired from the battlements, and was immediately answered from those of the Middle Tower. Other reports followed. And, alarmed by the sounds, the huge brethren hastily unlocked the door of their lodging, and entering it, to their infinite dismay, found the prisoner gone.

CHAPTER VIII

HOW GILBERT ESCAPED FROM THE BY-WARD TOWER, AND SWAM ACROSS THE MOAT; HOW OG HUNG XIT UPON A HOOK; AND HOW LAWRENCE NIGHTGALL BROUGHT THE TOKEN TO CICELY

Gilbert having freed himself from his bonds, and clambered into the chimney in the By-ward Tower in the manner previously related, ascended without any inconvenience, except what was occasioned by the pungent smoke arising from the blazing fagots beneath, until he reached the level of the upper story, where another fire-place, connected with the passage up which he was mounting, so narrowed its limits, that it seemed scarcely possible to proceed further. The sound of voices in the chamber on this floor also alarmed him, and for some minutes he suspended

his labour to listen. But as nothing occurred to disturb him, and it was evident, from the conversation of the speakers, that he had not been noticed, he presently resumed his task, and redoubling his efforts, soon vanquished all obstacles, and gained the opening of the chimney.

Here a fresh difficulty awaited him; and one for which he was wholly unprepared. The smoke found a vent through a small circular opening or louver, as it was termed—for there was no chimney-top to disperse it to the air—in the battlements. Through this opening he must necessarily creep; and, provided he could accomplish the feat, he had to elude the vigilance of the sentinels stationed on the roof of the turret. Luckily, the night was profoundly dark; and the gloom, increased by a thick mist from the river, was so intense, that an object could scarcely be discerned at a foot's distance. Thus favoured, Gilbert resolved to hazard the attempt.

Watching his opportunity, he drew himself cautiously through the louver, and without being noticed by the sentinel, who was standing beside it, crouched beneath the carriage of a culverin. In this state, he remained for a short time, meditating what course he should next pursue, and nerving himself for some desperate attempt, when a door at the side of the southern turret suddenly opened, and three men-at-arms, the foremost of whom carried a torch, came to relieve guard.

Aware that he should now infallibly be discovered, Gilbert started to his feet, and drawing a dagger which he had picked up in the giants' chamber, stood upon his defence. The movement betrayed him. Though confounded by his appearance, the sentinel nearest him presented his partisan at his breast and commanded him to surrender. Gilbert answered by striking up the man's arm, and instantly sprang over the battlements.

A loud splash told that he had fallen into the moat. The men held the torch over the side of the turret. But it was too dark to distinguish any object below. Presently, however, a noise was heard in the water that convinced them the fugitive was swimming for the opposite bank. One of the soldiers instantly discharged his caliver in the direction of the sound, but without effect.

This served as an alarm to the guards posted on the western ramparts, as well as to those on the Middle Tower, both of which commanded this part of the moat, and other shots were immediately fired. A signal was then rapidly passed from tower to tower, and from portal to portal, until it reached the

Bulwark Gate, which formed the only entrance to the fortress on the west, and a body of armed men carrying lights instantly sallied forth and hurried towards the side of the moat.

Gilbert, meanwhile, swam for his life. Guided by the torches, which served to discover his enemies rather than to betray him, he effected a secure landing. But before he had climbed the steep bank, he was observed by a soldier, who, making towards him, shouted to his comrades for assistance. In the struggle that ensued, the torch borne by the soldier was extinguished, and bursting from him, Gilbert darted at a swift pace up Tower-hill. His pursuers were close upon him. But, well acquainted with the spot, he contrived to baffle them, by flinging himself beneath the permanent scaffold, then standing upon the brow of the eminence, and thus eluded observation. As soon as his foes had passed, he struck off swiftly to the left, and leaping a low wall, skirted All-hallows Church, and speedily gained Tower Street.

While Gilbert was flying in this direction, his pursuers finding themselves at fault, hastened back, and endeavoured to discover some trace of him. Some mounted the steps of the scaffold to see whether he had taken refuge on its blood-stained planks, some crept under it, others examined the posts of the neighbouring gallows, while a fourth party flew to the postern gate, which defended the southern extremity of the city wall, in the hope that he might have been stopped by the watch. All, however, it is needless to say, were disappointed. And after some time had been fruitlessly expended, the whole party returned to the Tower to report the unsuccessful issue of their expedition.

Meanwhile, the report of the musquetry had reached the ears of Lord Clinton, the constable, who, attended by the lieutenant, the gentleman-porter, and a numerous patrol, chanced to be making the round of the fortifications at the time, and he descended to the gates to ascertain the cause of the alarm. On learning it, he immediately summoned the herald and the gigantic warders to his presence, and after sharply rebuking the former for neglect, ordered him into custody till the morning, when he proposed to take the duke's pleasure as to his punishment. He then turned to the giants, who tried to soften his displeasure by taking the blame upon themselves, and telling them he would listen to their statement when the herald was examined, and, in the interim, they would be answerable with their lives for any further dereliction of duty, he dismissed the assemblage, and returned with his train to the ramparts.

Among those who had been gathered together in the guard-room near the By-ward Tower—where the foregoing examination took place—were Nightgall and Xit, the latter having just returned from the palace, after a vain attempt to deliver his message to Lord Guilford Dudley, who, it has been already stated, was engaged at the time in secret conference with the Duke of Northumberland, and could not therefore be spoken with.

Ever on the alert, and suspicious of those around him, Nightgall overheard Og question the dwarf as to the cause of his absence; and perceiving, from Xit's manner, that he had some secret to communicate, he contrived to approach them unobserved. He then learnt the message with which the dwarf had been entrusted by Cicely, and enraged at her endeavour to overreach him, snatched the ring from him as he was displaying it to the giant, and threatened him with severe punishment, if he dared to meddle further in the matter.

As soon as he had recovered from his surprise, the affronted mannikin drew his rapier, and making several passes at Nightgall, would have certainly wounded him, if he had not dextrously avoided the blows by interposing the huge bulk of the giant between him and his assailant. The fury of the dwarf was so excessive, and the contortions into which he threw himself so inconceivably diverting, that Og could render him no assistance for laughing. Thrusting his sword between the giant's legs—now cutting on the right, now on the left—Xit tried in every way to hit the jailer, and must have succeeded, if Og, who was by no means desirous to have blood shed in so ridiculous a fray, and who enjoyed the pastime too much to speedily terminate it, had not prevented him.

Gog, moreover, having on the onset disarmed Nightgall, he could not protect himself except by keeping under the shelter of the giant. Foiled in his attempts, Xit's indignation knew no bounds, and exasperated by the derisive shouts and laughter of the spectators, he threatened to turn his sword against Og if he did not deliver up the jailer to his vengeance. This only produced louder roars of merriment from the bystanders; and the dwarf, whose passion had almost deprived him of reason, uttering a shrill scream like a child robbed of its plaything, threw himself on Og's leg, and scrambled up his body, with the intention of descending on the other side, and exterminating his foe.

This feat raised the merriment of the spectators to the utmost.

Og suffered the imp to ascend without opposition, and clinging to the points of the giant's slashed red hose, Xit drew himself up to his broad girdle, and then setting one foot on the circlet of raised gold thread which surrounded the badge on his breast, soon gained his shoulder, and would have leapt from thence upon his foe, if Og, who began to think it time to put an end to the sport, had not seized him by the leg as he was in the act of springing off, and held him at arm's-length, with his heels upwards.

After many useless struggles to liberate himself, and menaces of what he would do when he got free, which, as may be supposed, only provoked still further the laughter of the bystanders, Xit became so unmanageable, that Og fastened him by his nether garments to a hook in the wall, about fourteen feet from the ground, and left him to recover himself.

Thus perched, the dwarf hurled his rapier at Nightgall's head, and replied to the jeers of the assemblage by such mops and mows as an enraged ape is wont to make at its persecutors. After the lapse of a few minutes, however, he began to find his position so uncomfortable, that he was fain to supplicate for release, to which, on receiving his assurance of quieter conduct for the future, Og consented, and accordingly unhooked him, and set him on the ground.

Nightgall, meanwhile, had taken advantage of this diversion, to leave the Guard-room, and hasten to the Stone Kitchen.

Dame Potentia was just retiring to rest as the jailer reached her dwelling, and it was only by the most urgent importunity that he succeeded in obtaining admission.

"Your pardon, good dame," he said, as the door was opened. "I have that to tell Cicely, which will effectually cure her love for the young esquire."

"In that case, you are right welcome, Master Nightgall," she replied; "for the poor child has almost cried her pretty eyes out since I brought her home. And I have been so moved by her tears, that I greatly misdoubt, if her lover had presented himself instead of you, whether I should have had the heart to refuse to let him see her."

"Fool!" muttered Nightgall, half aside. "Where is she?" he added aloud. "I have no time to lose. I have a secret execution to attend before daybreak."

"Yours is a butcherly office, Master Nightgall," observed Peter Trusbut, who was dozing in an arm-chair by the fire. "Those secret executions, to my mind, are little better than state murders. I would not, for all the power of the Duke of North-

umberland, hold your office, or that of Gilliam Mauger, the headsman."

"Nor I yours, on the same fee, Master Pantler," rejoined Nightgall. "Tastes differ. Where is your daughter, good dame?"

"In her chamber," replied Potentia. "Ho! Cicely, sweetheart!" she added, knocking at a door at the end of a short passage leading out of the kitchen on the right. "Here is Master Nightgall desires to speak with you."

"Does he bring me the token?" demanded the maiden, from within.

"Ay marry, does he, child," replied the dame, winking at the jailer. "Heaven forgive me the falsehood," she added, "for I know not what she means."

"Leave us a moment, dear mother," said Cicely, hastily unfastening the door. "Now, Master Nightgall," she continued, as Dame Potentia retired, and the jailer entered the room, "have you fulfilled your compact?"

"Cicely," rejoined the jailer, regarding her sternly, "you have not kept faith with me. You have despatched a messenger to the palace."

"Ah! he is free," exclaimed the maiden, joyfully, "your plans have been defeated!"

Nightgall smiled bitterly.

"My messenger cannot have failed," she continued, with a sudden change of countenance. "I am sure Lord Guilford would not abandon his favourite esquire. Tell me, what has happened?"

"I am come to claim fulfilment of your pledge," rejoined the jailer.

"Then you have set him free," cried Cicely. "Where is the token?"

"Behold it," replied Nightgall, raising his hand, on which her lover's ring sparkled.

"Lost!—lost!" shrieked Cicely, falling senseless upon the floor.

The jailer gazed at her a moment in silence, but did not attempt to offer any assistance. He then turned upon his heel, and strode out of the room.

"Look to your daughter, dame," he observed, as he passed through the Stone Kitchen.

CHAPTER IX

OF THE MYSTERIOUS MANNER IN WHICH GUNNORA BRAOSE WAS BROUGHT TO THE TOWER

HURRYING along Tower Street, and traversing Eastcheap and Watling Street, then narrow but picturesque thoroughfares, Gilbert, to whom it is now necessary to return, did not draw breath till he reached the eastern extremity of St. Paul's. As he passed this reverend and matchless structure, the destruction of which was the heaviest loss sustained by the metropolis in the Great Fire, he strained his eyes towards its lofty tower, but the gloom was too profound to enable him to discern anything of it beyond a dark and heavy mass.

"Thou art at present benighted, glorious fane!" he cried aloud. "But a bright dawn shall arise for thee, and all thy ancient splendour, with thy ancient faith, be restored. If I could see Mary queen, and hear mass solemnised within thy walls, I could die content."

"And you shall hear it," said a voice in his ear.

"Who speaks?" asked Gilbert, trembling.

"Be at St. Paul's Cross to-morrow at midnight, and you shall know," replied the voice. "You are a loyal subject of Queen Mary, and a true Catholic, or your words belie you?"

"I am both," answered Gilbert.

"Fail not to meet me then," rejoined the other, "and you shall receive assurance that your wishes shall be fulfilled. There are those at work who will speedily accomplish the object you desire."

"I will aid them heart and hand," cried Gilbert.

"Your name?" demanded the other.

"I am called Gilbert Pot," answered the youth, "and am drawer to Ninion Saunders, at the Baptist's Head, in Ludgate."

"A vintner's boy!" exclaimed the other, disdainfully.

"Ay, a vintner's boy," returned Gilbert. "But, when the usurper, Jane Dudley, was proclaimed at Cheapside this morning, mine was the only voice raised for Queen Mary."

"For which bold deed you were nailed to the pillory," rejoined the other.

"I was," replied Gilbert; "and was, moreover, carried to the Tower, whence I have just escaped."

"Your courage shall not pass unrequited," replied the speaker. "Where are you going?"

"To my master's, at the Baptist's Head, at the corner of Creed Lane, not a bow-shot hence."

"It will not be safe to go thither," observed the other. "Your master will deliver you to the watch."

"I will risk it, nevertheless," answered Gilbert. "I have an old grandame whom I desire to see."

"Something strikes me!" exclaimed the other. "Is your grandame the old woman who warned the usurper Jane not to proceed to the Tower?"

"She is," returned Gilbert.

"This is a strange encounter, in good sooth," cried the other "She is the person I am in search of. You must procure me instant speech with her."

"I will conduct you to her, right willingly, sir," replied Gilbert. "But she says little to any one, and may refuse to answer your questions."

"We shall see," rejoined the other. "Lead on, good Gilbert.

Followed by his unknown companion, about whom he felt a strange curiosity, not unalloyed with fear, Gilbert proceeded at a rapid pace towards his destination. The whole of the buildings then surrounding St. Paul's, it is almost unnecessary to say, were destroyed by the same fire that consumed the cathedral; and, though the streets still retain their original names, their situation is in some respects changed.

Passing beneath the shade of a large tree, which then grew at the western boundary of the majestic edifice, Gilbert darted through a narrow entry into Ave Maria Lane, and turning to the left, speedily reached Ludgate, which he crossed at some fifty paces from the gate—then used, like several of the other city portals, as a prison—and, entering Creed Lane, halted before a low-built house on the right. The shutters were closed, but it was evident, from the uproarious sounds issuing from the dwelling, that revelry was going on within. Gilbert did not deem it prudent to open the street door, but calling to his companion, he went to the back of the tavern, and gained admittance through a window on the ground floor.

"They are having a merry rouse," he observed to the other, "in honour of the usurper; and my master, Ninion, will be too far gone to notice aught except his guests and his sack brewage, so that I may safely conduct your worship to my grandame. But first let me strike a light."

With this, he searched about for flint and steel, and having

found them, presently set fire to a small lamp hanging against the wall, which he removed and turned, not without some apprehension, towards the stranger.

His glance fell upon a tall man, with an ample feuille-morte coloured cloak thrown over his left shoulder, so as completely to muffle the lower part of his features. Gilbert could see nothing of the stranger's face, except an aquiline nose, and a pair of piercing black eyes; but the expression of the latter was so stern and searching, that his own regards involuntarily sank before them. A bonnet of black velvet, decorated with a single drooping feather, drawn over the brow, added to the stranger's disguise. But what was revealed of the physiognomy was so striking that Gilbert was satisfied he should never forget it.

Something, indeed, there was of majesty in the stranger's demeanour, that, coupled with his sinister looks and the extraordinary brilliancy of his eyes, impressed the superstitious youth with the notion that he was in the presence of an unearthly being. Struck by this idea, he glanced at the stranger's feet, in expectation of finding one of the distinctive marks of the Prince of Darkness. But he beheld nothing except a finely-formed limb, clothed in black silk hose and a velvet shoe, above which hung the point of a lengthy rapier.

"I am neither the enemy of mankind nor your enemy, good youth," observed the stranger, who guessed the cause of Gilbert's apprehensions. "Bring your grandame hither, and take heed how you approach her, or your looks will alarm her more than mine do you."

It was not without reason that this caution was given. Gilbert's appearance was ghastly in the extreme. His countenance was haggard with the loss of blood; his garments torn and saturated with moisture; and his black dripping locks, escaping from the blood-stained bandage around his head, contrasted fearfully with the deathly paleness of his visage. Acknowledging the justice of the suggestion, Gilbert decided upon proceeding in the dark, that his appearance might not be observed.

Accordingly, he crept cautiously up stairs, and returned in a few minutes with his aged relative. Gilbert found the stranger in the same attitude he had left him, and his appearance startled Gunnora as much as it had done him.

Crossing herself, she glanced uneasily at the mysterious stranger. From him her eye wandered to Gilbert; and terrified by his haggard looks, she cried in a tone of anxiety, "You have

suffered much, my child. The ill news reached me of the shameful punishment with which you have been visited for your loyalty to your true queen. I heard also that you had been conveyed a prisoner to the Tower; and was about to make suit to the gracious lady, Jane Dudley, in your behalf. Was I wrongfully informed?"

"No, mother, you were not," replied Gilbert. "But heed me not. There stands the worshipful gentleman who desires to speak with you."

"I am ready to answer his questions," said Gunnora. "Let him propose them."

"First, let me tell you, dame," said the stranger, "that your grandson's devotion to Queen Mary shall not pass unrequited. Ere many days—perchance many hours—shall have passed, he shall exchange his serge doublet for a suit of velvet."

"You hear that, mother," exclaimed Gilbert, joyfully.

"Who are you that make him the offer?" asked Gunnora, stedfastly regarding the stranger.

"You shall know, anon," he replied. "Suffice it, I can make good my words. Your presence is required in the Tower."

"By the Lady Jane—I should say by the queen?" rejoined Gunnora.

"By the privy council," returned the stranger.

"What do they seek from me?" demanded the old woman.

"To testify to the death of his late majesty, King Edward the Sixth," replied the other.

"Ha!" exclaimed Gunnora.

"Fear nothing," rejoined the stranger. "The council will befriend you. Their object is to prove that Edward was poisoned by Northumberland's order. Can you do this?"

"I can," replied Gunnora. "My hand administered the fatal draught."

"Yours, mother!" ejaculated Gilbert, horror-stricken.

"Prove this, and Northumberland will lose his head," said the stranger.

"Were my own to fall with it, I would do so," replied Gunnora. "My sole wish is to avenge my foster-son, the great Duke of Somerset, who fell by Northumberland's foul practices. It was therefore when all the physicians of the royal household were dismissed, and the duke sent messengers for empirical aid, that I presented myself, and offered my services. When I beheld the royal sufferer, I saw he had but short space to live. But short as it was, it was too long for the duke. A potion

was prepared by Northumberland, which I administered. From that moment his highness grew worse, and in six hours he was a corpse."

"It was a cursed deed," cried Gilbert.

"True," replied Gunnora, "it was so, and Heaven will surely avenge it. But I did it to get Northumberland into my power. The king's case was past all remedy. But he might have lingered for days and weeks, and the duke was impatient for the crown. I was impatient too, but it was for his head. And therefore I did his bidding.

"Your vengeance shall be fully gratified," replied the stranger. "Come with me."

"Hold!" exclaimed Gunnora. "How will this testimony affect the Lady Jane?"

"It will deprive her of her crown—perchance her head," rejoined the stranger.

"Then it shall never be uttered," replied Gunnora, firmly.

"Torture shall wring it from you," cried the stranger, furiously.

The old woman drew herself up to her full height, and, regarding the stranger fixedly, answered in a stern tone, "Let it be tried upon me."

"Mother," said Gilbert, striding between them, and drawing his dagger, "go back to your own room. You shall not peril your safety thus."

"Tush!" exclaimed the stranger, impatiently. "No harm shall befall her. I thought you were both loyal subjects of Queen Mary. How can she assume the sovereign power while Jane grasps the sceptre?"

"But you aim at her life?" said Gunnora.

"No," replied the stranger, "I would preserve her. My object is to destroy Northumberland, and restore the crown to her to whom it rightfully belongs."

"In that case I will go with you," returned the old woman.

"You will fall into a snare," interposed her grandson. "Let him declare who he is."

"I will reveal my name to your grandame, boy," replied the stranger. And advancing towards Gunnora, he whispered in her ear.

The old woman started and trembled.

"Hinder me not, Gilbert," she said. "I must go with him."

"Shall I accompany you?" asked her grandson.

"On no account," replied the stranger, "unless you desire

to be lodged in the deepest dungeon in the Tower. Be at the place of rendezvous to-morrow night, and you shall know more. Are you ready, good dame?"

Gunnora signified her assent; and, after a few parting words with her grandson, the latter unfastened a small door, opening upon the yard, and let them out.

They were scarcely clear of the house, when the stranger, placing a silver whistle to his lips, blew a call upon it, which was instantly answered by a couple of attendants. At a signal from their leader they placed themselves on either side of Gunnora, and in spite of her resistance and remonstrances, dragged her forcibly along. The stranger, who marched a few yards in advance, proceeded at so rapid a pace, that the old woman found it utterly impossible to keep up with him. She therefore stood still, and refused to take another step. But this did not avail her, for the two attendants seized her in their arms, and hurried forward as swiftly as before.

Though bewildered and alarmed, Gunnora did not dare to cry out for assistance. Indeed, they did not encounter a single passenger in the streets, until, as they were descending Budge Row, they heard the clank of arms, and beheld the gleam of torches borne by a party of the watch who were approaching from Canwick Street, or as it is now called, Cannon Street.

Turning off on the right, the stranger descended Dowgate Hill, and gained Thames Street before he had been remarked. A short time sufficed to bring him to St. Mary Hill, up which he mounted, and entering Thames Street, and passing St. Dunstan's in the East on the right, and the ancient church of All Hallows Barking on the left, he reached Great Tower Hill.

By this time, the vapours from the river had cleared off. The stars had begun to peep forth, and the first glimpse of day to peer in the east. By this light, and from this spot, the stern and sombre outline of the Tower, with its ramparts, its citadel, and its numerous lesser turrets, was seen to great advantage. On the summit of the Hill appeared the scaffold and the gallows already noticed.

Pausing for a moment, and pointing to a range of buildings, the summits of which could just be distinguished, to the south of the White Tower, the stranger said, "Within that palace Northumberland now reposes, surrounded by a triple line of fortifications, and defended by a thousand armed men. But if you will only reveal all you know, ere another week has passed his head shall be laid on that scaffold."

"The last time I beheld that fatal spot," returned Gunnora, "my foster-son, the Duke of Somerset, was decapitated there. If I can avenge him upon his foe, I shall die content."

"Obey my directions implicitly, and you *shall* do so," rejoined the other.

"How are we to enter the Tower?" asked Gunnora.

"Not by the ordinary road," replied the other, significantly. "But we shall be observed if we linger here. Forward!"

Crossing the Hill in the direction of the City Postern, the stranger suddenly wheeled round, and, under cover of a low wall, approached the moat. Exactly opposite the Devilin Tower, and the bastion occupying the north-western angle of the exterior line of fortifications, stood at this time, at a little distance from the moat, a small low building. Towards this structure the stranger hastened. As he drew near it, he glanced uneasily at the ramparts, to ascertain whether he was observed. But though the measured tread of the sentinels and the clank of arms were distinctly audible, he remained unperceived.

Unlocking the door, the whole party entered the building, which was apparently deserted. After a moment's search, the stranger discovered a spring in the floor, which he pulled, and a trap-door opened, disclosing a long and steep flight of steps, at the foot of which sat a man with a mask, bearing a torch.

No sooner did this person hear the noise occasioned by the opening of the trap-door, than he hastily ascended, and placed himself in readiness to guide the party. On gaining the level ground, it was evident, from the dampness of the arched roof of the passage, and the slippery surface of the floor along which they trod, that they were far below the bottom of the moat. Traversing this damp dark passage for more than a hundred yards, the humid atmosphere gave place to a more wholesome air, and the ground became drier.

Hitherto, the passage had been about three feet wide and seven high, and was arched and flagged with stone. But they had now arrived at a point where it became more lofty, and their further progress was checked by a strong door plated with iron, and studded with nails. Taking a huge key from his girdle, the man in the mask unlocked this ponderous door, and, admitting the party, fastened it behind him. He then led them up another stone staircase, similar in all respects to the first, except that it did not ascend to more than half the height. This brought them to a vaulted gallery, from which three passages branched.

Pursuing that on the right, and preceded by his masked attendant, the stranger strode silently along. As she followed him, Gunnora noticed several strong doors in the wall, which she took to be entrances to dungeons. After threading this passage, the party ascended a third short flight of steps, at the top of which was a trap-door. It was opened by the guide, and admitted them into a small stone chamber, the walls of which appeared, from the embrasures of the windows, to be of immense thickness. The roof was groined and arched. In the centre of the room stood a small table, on which some provisions were placed. A small copper lamp, suspended from the roof, threw a sickly light around, and discovered a little pallet stretched in a recess on the right.

"You are now in the Bowyer's Tower, in the chamber where it is said the Duke of Clarence was drowned in the butt of malmsey," observed the stranger. "Here you will remain till your presence is required by the council."

Gunnora would have remonstrated, but the stranger waved his hand to her to keep silence, and, followed by his attendants, descended through the trap-door, which was closed and bolted beneath.

CHAPTER X

HOW THE DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND MENACED SIMON RENARD IN SAINT PETER'S CHAPEL ON THE TOWER GREEN; AND HOW QUEEN JANE INTERPOSED BETWEEN THEM

It will now be proper to ascertain how far the Duke of Northumberland was justified in his suspicion of Queen Jane's conduct being influenced by some secret and adverse counsel. After the abrupt departure of Lord Guilford Dudley for Sion House, as before related, she was greatly distressed, and refused at first to credit the intelligence. But when it was confirmed beyond all doubt by a message from her husband himself, declaring that he would not return till she had acceded to his request, she burst into tears, and withdrew to her own chamber, where she remained for some time alone.

When she re-appeared, it was evident from her altered looks that she had suffered deeply. But it was evident also, from her composure of countenance and firmness of manner, that whatever resolution she had formed she would adhere to it.

Summoning the Earls of Arundel and Pembroke to her presence, she briefly explained to them that she had heard, with infinite

concern and uneasiness, that the council had proposed to raise her husband to the throne, because she foresaw that it would breed trouble and dissatisfaction, and greatly endanger her own government.

"Your highness judges rightly," replied the Earl of Pembroke. "It will be said that in thus elevating his son, Northumberland seeks only his own aggrandisement."

"And it will be truly said, my lord," rejoined Jane. "But if this is your opinion, why was your voice given in favour of the measure?"

"No man is bound to accuse himself," replied Pembroke.

"But every man is bound to speak the truth, my lord," rejoined Jane. "Again I ask you, why your assent was given to this measure, which, by your own admission, is fraught with danger?"

"The Duke of Northumberland is my enemy," replied the earl, sternly. "Had this step been taken it would have ensured his destruction."

"You speak frankly, my lord," rejoined the queen. "But you forget that it must have ensured my destruction also."

"I am a loyal subject of your majesty," replied the Earl of Pembroke, "and will shed my last drop of blood in the defence of your crown. But I will not submit to the duke's imperious conduct."

"And yet, my lord, you owe your own dignity to him," rejoined Jane, sarcastically. "Sir William Herbert would not have been Earl of Pembroke but for the duke's intercession with our cousin Edward. For shame, my lord! you owe him too much to act against him."

"*I* owe him nothing," interposed the Earl of Arundel, "and may therefore speak without risk of any such imputation as your majesty has thrown out against Lord Pembroke. If the overweening power of the Duke of Northumberland be not checked, it will end in his downfall, and the downfall of all those with whom he is connected."

"I thank you for your counsel, my lord," replied the queen; "and, setting down much to your private animosity, will place the rest to loyalty to myself."

"Your highness will be speedily satisfied of the truth of my assertion, if you refuse compliance with Northumberland's demands," replied Pembroke. "But you will find it, unless you have recourse to strong measures, a difficult and a dangerous game to play."

"To one who, though so young in years, is yet so old in wisdom as your majesty," added the Earl of Arundel, "it will be needless to say, that on the first decisive movement of your reign—as on that of a battle—depends the victory. If you yield, all is lost. From this one step the duke will estimate your character, and become either your servant or your master. From his conduct, also, you will know what to expect from him hereafter."

"My resolution is taken, my lords," returned the queen. "The course I have resolved upon in reference to the duke, you will learn when I meet you in the council-chamber, where he will be present to speak for himself, and, if need be, defend himself. My desire is that my reign should begin and proceed in peace. And, if you hope for my favour, you will forget your differences with his grace, and act in concert with me. In asserting my own power, I trust I shall convince him of the futility of any further struggle with me, and so bring him to a sense of duty."

"Your majesty may depend upon the full support of your council," rejoined Arundel.

"I doubt it not, my lord," replied Jane. "And now to the business on which I summoned you. It may have reached you that my dear lord has departed this morning for Sion House, in great displeasure that I have refused to comply with his wishes."

"We have heard as much," replied both noblemen.

"My desire is that you hasten after him and entreat him to return with all speed," pursued Jane.

"Your majesty then consents!" exclaimed Pembroke, hastily.

"Not so, my lord," replied the queen. "I will raise him to his father's rank. He shall have a dukedom, but not a kingdom."

"I would counsel your majesty to reflect ere you concede thus much," observed Arundel.

"I have already said that my resolution is taken," replied the queen. "Repeat what I have told you to him, and entreat him to return."

"*Entreat* him!" echoed Pembroke scornfully. "It is not for your highness to entreat, but to command. Obedience sworn at the altar by the lips of the Queen of England, is cancelled as soon as uttered. Your husband is your subject. Empower us to bring him to you, and he shall be at your feet within an hour."

"My pleasure is that you literally fulfil my injunctions, my lords," replied the queen. "Lord Guilford Dudley was the

husband of my choice. When I gave my hand to him at the altar, I had no thought that it would ever grasp a sceptre. Nor, till I obtained this unlooked-for—and, believe me, most unwished-for dignity—did the slightest misunderstanding ever arise between us. But now that I am compelled to sacrifice my affections at the shrine of duty—now that I am queen as well as consort, and he is subject as well as husband—this disagreement has occurred, which a little calm reflection will put to rights."

"What if his lordship should refuse to return with us?" asked Pembroke.

"You will use your best endeavours to induce him to do so," replied Jane, a tear starting to her eye, and her voice faltering in spite of her efforts to maintain her composure. "But if you fail, I shall at least be satisfied that I have done my duty."

"Your majesty's commands shall be obeyed," replied Pembroke. "But we must have your licence to go forth, for we are detained as prisoners within the Tower."

"You shall have it," replied Jane. And she immediately wrote out the order.

"The passport must be countersigned by the duke," said Pembroke. "The gate-keepers will not hold this sufficient authority."

"How!" exclaimed Jane, reddening. "Am I not queen? Is not my authority absolute here?"

"Not while the duke holds his high office, gracious madam," returned Pembroke. "His followers give you the *name* of queen. But they look up to him as sovereign."

"My lord, I need no assurance that you are Northumberland's mortal enemy," replied Jane.

"I am your majesty's loyal subject," replied the earl. "And if your passport be respected, I will confess that I have wronged him."

"And if it be not, I will confess I have wronged *you*, my lord," rejoined Jane. "The royal barge is at your service. An usher shall conduct you to it."

So saying, she motioned one of her train to attend them, and the two nobles bowed and departed.

As soon as they had quitted the royal presence, Pembroke observed to his companion:

"We have now effected a quarrel, which will end in Northumberland's destruction and Jane's dethronement. Simon Renard will so fan the flame, that it shall never be extinguished."

As the earl anticipated, the queen's pass was refused, the warders declaring that their instructions were to suffer no one to go forth without the duke's written order. They then returned to the palace. It was some time before they were admitted to the queen, as she was engaged in the angry conference previously related with her mother-in-law. When the duchess had departed, they sought an audience.

"How, my lords," cried Jane, turning very pale; "do I see you again so soon?"

"It is as I informed your highness," replied the Earl of Pembroke, laying the order on the table. "The duke is master here."

"Ha!" exclaimed the queen, starting to her feet, "am I deserted by my husband, braved by the duke, and treated like an infant by his imperious dame? I cry you pardon, my lords, you have *not* deceived me. You are my loyal subjects. Oh! I could weep to think how I have been deluded. But they shall find they have not made me queen for nothing. While I *have* power I will use it. My lords, I bid you to the council at noon to-morrow. I shall summon Lord Guilford Dudley to attend it, and he will refuse at his peril."

"Have a care, gracious madam, how you proceed with the duke," replied Pembroke. "Your royal predecessor, Edward, it is said, came not fairly by his end. If Northumberland finds you an obstacle to his designs, instead of a means of forwarding them, he will have little scruple in removing you."

"I shall be wary, doubt it not, my lord," rejoined Jane. "To-morrow you shall learn my pleasure. I count on your fidelity."

"Your majesty may safely do so," they replied. And with renewed assurances of zeal, they departed.

"Her spirit is now fairly roused," observed Pembroke, as they quitted the palace. "If she hold in the same mind till to-morrow, it is all over with Northumberland.

"*Souvent femme varie, bien fol est qui s'y fie,*" observed Simon Renard, advancing to meet them. "Let me know how you have sped."

The Earl of Pembroke then related the particulars of their interview with the queen.

"All goes on as well as I could desire," observed Renard. "But she must come to an open rupture with him, else the crafty duke will find some means of soothing her wounded pride. Be that my task."

Taking their way slowly along the outer ward, the trio passed under the gloomy gateway of the Bloody Tower, and ascended a flight of steps on the left leading to the Tower Green. Here (as now) grew an avenue of trees, and beneath their shade they found De Noailles, who instantly joined them. Renard then entered into a full detail of his schemes, and acquainted them with the information he had received through his messengers, in spite of all the duke's precautions, of the accession in strength which Mary's party had received, and of the numbers who had declared themselves in her favour. He further intimated that his agents were at work among the people to produce a revolt in the metropolis.

As they proceeded across the Tower Green, the Earl of Pembroke paused at a little distance from the chapel, and pointing to a square patch of ground, edged by a border of white stones, and completely destitute of herbage, said—

"Two queens have perished here. On this spot stood the scaffolds of Anne Boleyn and Catherine Howard."

"And ere long a third shall be added to their number," observed Renard, gloomily.

Shaping their course towards the north-east angle of the fortress, they stopped before a small turret, at that time called the Martin Tower, and used as a place of confinement for state offenders, but now denominated the Jewel Tower, from the circumstance of its being the depository of the regalia.

"Within that tower are imprisoned the Catholic Bishops Gardiner and Bonner," remarked Arundel.

"Let Mary win the crown, and it shall be tenanted by the Protestants, Crammer and Ridley," muttered Renard.

While the others returned to the Green, Renard lingered for an instant to contemplate the White Tower, which is seen perhaps to greater advantage from this point of view than from any other in the fortress. And as it is in most respects unchanged, excepting such repairs as time has rendered necessary, and some alterations in the doorways and windows, to be noted hereafter, the modern visitor to this spot may, if he pleases, behold it in much the same state that it appeared to the plotting Spanish ambassador.

Rising to a height of nearly a hundred feet; built in a quadrangular form; terminated at each angle by a lofty turret, three of which are square, while the fourth, situated at the north-east, is circular, and of larger dimensions than the others; embattled; having walls of immense thickness, exceeding fourteen

feet, and further strengthened by broad flat buttresses, dividing the face of the building into compartments; lighted by deep semi-circular-arched windows—this massive stronghold, constructed entirely of stone, and now in some parts defaced by a coating of mortar and flints, occupied an area of an hundred and sixteen feet on the north and south, and ninety-six on the east and west. At the south-east corner is a broad semi-circular projection, marking the situation of St. John's Chapel, already described. The round turret, at the north-east angle, was used as an observatory by the celebrated astronomer, Flamstead, in the reign of Charles the Second. The principal entrance was on the north, and was much more spacious than the modern doorway, which occupies its site.

At the period of this chronicle the White Tower was connected, as has already been mentioned, on the south-east with the ancient palace. On the south stood a fabric called the Jewel House; while at the south-western angle was another embattled structure of equal elevation and dimensions with the By-ward Tower and the other gates, denominated the Coal-harbour Tower. These, with the Lanthorn Tower and the line of buildings extending in an easterly direction towards the Broad Arrow Tower, have totally disappeared, and the White Tower is now disconnected with every other edifice. For centuries it has stood, and for centuries may it continue to stand! Within its walls the old monarchs of England have held their councils; within its vaults prisoners have sighed; from its gates queens have come forth to execution! Long may it flourish as a fearful memento of the past.

On the present occasion, it presented a stirring picture. From a tall staff, planted on the roof, floated the royal standard. Cannon bristled from its battlements, and armed men were seen marching from post to post on its platforms. Before the principal entrance four warders were stationed; and in front troops of arquebusiers and archers were passing under the review of their leaders. The sound of martial music filled the air; pennons and banners fluttered in the breeze; and pikes, steel caps, and corslets glittered in the sunbeams. Amid these warlike groups, the figures of the gigantic warders and their diminutive attendant, Xit, caught the eye of Renard, and filled him with astonishment—the former being taller by the head and shoulders than the mass of their companions, besides far exceeding them in bulk and size of limb; while the latter, with more than ordinary pretensions to the dignity of manhood, had

scarcely the stature of a child. It must not be omitted in the description of the White Tower that the summits of its four turrets were surmounted by large vanes, each decorated with a crown, in the hollows of which, as in our own time, the jackdaws were accustomed to build.

After gazing at this magnificent structure for a few minutes, and indulging in the emotions which its contemplation inspired, Simon Renard followed his companions, and resumed his discourse. They had again adverted to Jane, when the door of the principal entrance of the White Tower was thrown open, and, attended by the Duchess of Suffolk and the Ladies Hastings and Herbert, the subject of their conference issued from it and proceeded on foot towards St. Peter's Chapel. The road was immediately cleared by her attendants, and the three gigantic warders and their tiny companion marched before her, and planted themselves on either side of the chapel door. Glancing significantly at his companions, Renard motioned them to follow him, and hurried towards the sacred pile.

"What! you a rigid Catholic, M. Renard," observed Pembroke, "about to attend Protestant worship? Hopes may be entertained of your conversion."

"Stronger hopes may be entertained that I shall restore the ancient worship," muttered Renard, as he entered the chapel, and took his place unobserved by the queen behind one of the columns of the aisle, while she advanced to the altar.

Erected in the reign of Edward the First, the little chapel of St. Peter ad Vincula (the parochial church—for the Tower, it is almost needless to say, is a parish in itself), is the second structure occupying the same site and dedicated to the same saint. The earlier fabric was much more spacious, and contained two chancels, with stalls for the king and queen, as appears from the following order for its repair issued in the reign of Henry the Third, and recorded by Stow: "The king to the keepers of the Tower work, sendeth greeting: We command you to brush or plaster with lime well and decently the chancel of St. Mary in the church of St. Peter within the bailiwick of our Tower of London, and the chancel of St. Peter in the same church; and from the entrance of the chancel of St. Peter to the space of four feet beyond the stalls made for our own and our queen's use in the same church; and the same stalls to be painted. And the little Mary with her shrine and the images of St. Peter, St. Nicholas, and Katherine, and the beam beyond the altar of St. Peter, and the little cross with its images to be coloured anew,

and to be refreshed with good colours. And that ye cause to be made a certain image of St. Christopher holding and carrying Jesus where it may best and most conveniently be done, and painted in the foresaid church. And that ye cause two fair tables to be made and painted of the best colours concerning the stories of the blessed Nicholas and Katherine, before the altars of the said saints in the same church. And that ye cause to be made two fair cherubims with a cheerful and joyful countenance standing on the right and left of the great cross in the said church. And moreover, one marble font with marble pillars well and handsomely wrought."

Thus much respecting the ancient edifice. The more recent chapel is a small, unpretending stone structure, and consists of a nave and an aisle at the north, separated by pointed arches, supported by clustered stone pillars of great beauty. Its chief interest is derived from the many illustrious and ill-fated dead crowded within its narrow walls.

Here rested, for a brief season, the body of John Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, beheaded in 1535, for denying the king's supremacy, "a prelate," says Holinshed, "of great learning and of very good life. The Pope had elected him a cardinal and sent his hat as far as Calais. But his head was off before his hat was on, so that they met not." Next to Fisher was interred his friend, the wise, the witty, the eloquent Sir Thomas More, whom Hall, the chronicler, hesitates whether he shall describe as "a foolish wise man, or a wise foolish man," and who jested even on the scaffold. His body was afterwards removed, at the intercession of his daughter, Margaret Roper, to Chelsea. Here also was interred the last of the right line of the Plantagenets, Margaret, Countess of Salisbury, the mother of Cardinal Pole. The venerable countess refused to lay her head upon the block, saying (as Lord Herbert of Cherbury reports), "'So should traitors do, and I am none.' Neither did it serve that the executioner told her it was the fashion: so turning her grey head every way, she bid him, if he would have it, to get it as he could: *so he was constrained to fetch it off slovenly*."

Here also was deposited the headless trunk of another of Henry the Eighth's victims, Thomas Lord Cromwell, the son of a blacksmith, who, having served as a common soldier under Bourbon, at the sack of Rome, entered Wolsey's service, and rose to be Grand Chamberlain of the realm. Here, in Elizabeth's reign, were brought the remains of Thomas Howard, Duke of Norfolk, who aspired to the hand of the Queen of Scots. And

here also were laid those of Robert Devereux, the rash and ill-fated Earl of Essex. Under the communion-table was interred, at a later date, the daring and unfortunate Duke of Monmouth, who fell a sacrifice to his ambition. And to come down to yet more recent times, beneath the little gallery at the west of the chapel, were buried the three leaders of the rebellion of 1745, Lords Kilmarnock, Balmerino, and Lovat.

There were four other graves, which, as being more nearly connected with the personages introduced in this chronicle, it will be proper to notice separately. Before the altar, on the west, a plain flag bore the inscription, "Edward Seymour, Duke of Somerset, 1552." On the next grave to that of the great Lord Protector was written "Katherine Howard," and on the adjoining stone, "Anne Boleyn." These two queens—equally unfortunate, but not, perhaps, equally culpable—perished within five years of each other, the latter suffering in 1536, the former in 1541. Close to the wall on the right, a fourth grave bore the name of "Thomas Seymour, Baron Sudley." Seymour was brother to the Duke of Somerset, and Lord High Admiral of England; and the only stain on the Protector's otherwise reproachless character is, that he signed his death-warrant, and declined to use the power he undoubtedly possessed, of procuring his pardon. The fiery and ambitious admiral was beheaded in 1549.

Between this grave and that of Anne Boleyn intervened a plain stone, unmarked by any inscription, and indicating a vacant tomb. Beneath this flag, eighteen months after the execution of his victim, the Duke of Somerset, and barely six weeks from the day on which this chronicle opens, was deposited the headless trunk of the once all-powerful and arrogant Northumberland.

The service over, as the queen was about to depart, Simon Renard advanced to meet her. Returning his ceremonious salutation by a dignified greeting, Jane, with a look of some surprise, inquired the cause of his presence.

"I might have chosen a more fitting season and place for an audience with your majesty," replied Renard, in the low and silvery tone which he could adopt at pleasure. "But I have that to communicate which emboldens me to break through all forms."

"Declare it then, sir," replied the queen.

Renard glanced significantly at her. She understood him, and motioning her attendants to withdraw to a little distance, they obeyed; and Lady Hastings seized the opportunity of

despatching a messenger to her father to acquaint him with the circumstance, as already related.

What was the nature of the disclosure made by the wily ambassador to the queen, it is not our present purpose to reveal. That it was important was evident from the deep attention she paid to it; and it was apparent, also, from her changing looks and agitated demeanour, that her fears were greatly aroused. As Renard proceeded, her uneasiness increased so much that she could scarcely support herself, and her attendants were about to hasten to her assistance, when a gesture from the ambassador checked them.

Different inferences were drawn by the various witnesses of this singular interview. But all were satisfied of the ascendancy which Renard had, in some manner, acquired over the youthful sovereign. While glances of triumph were exchanged between the conspiring lords, who watched them from their station in the aisle, the greatest misgivings were experienced by the Ladies Hastings and Herbert. Unable to comprehend the mystery, they were so much struck with the peculiar expression of Jane's countenance, which precisely resembled the look she wore after the mysterious occurrence in St. John's Chapel, that they could not help thinking the present conference had some relation to that event.

Renard's manner, indeed, was so extraordinary that it furnished some clue to the nature of his discourse. Casting off the insinuating tone and deferential deportment with which he had commenced, he gradually assumed a look and accent of command, and almost of menace. His figure dilated, and fixing his black flaming eye upon the trembling queen, he stamped his foot upon the vacant grave on which he was standing, and said, in a voice so loud that it reached the ears of the listeners:

"Your majesty will never wear your crown in safety till Northumberland lies here."

Before any answer could be returned, the door of the chapel was suddenly thrown open, and the duke presented himself. A momentary change passed over Renard's countenance at this interruption. But he instantly recovered his composure, and folding his arms upon his breast, awaited the result.

Unable to control his indignation, the duke strode towards them, and flinging his jewelled cap on the ground, drew his sword.

"M. Renard," he exclaimed, "you are a traitor!"

"To whom, my lord?" replied Renard, calmly.

"To me—to the queen," rejoined the duke.

"If to be your grace's enemy is to be a traitor, I confess I am one," retorted Renard sternly. "But I am no traitor to her majesty."

"It is false!" exclaimed the duke, furiously. "You are her worst and most dangerous enemy. And nothing but the sacred spot in which you have sought shelter, prevents me from taking instant vengeance upon you."

Renard smiled disdainfully.

"Your grace threatens safely," he said, in a taunting tone.

"Insolent!" exclaimed the duke, roused to a pitch of ungovernable fury. "Draw and defend yourself, or I will strike you dead at my feet."

"Put up your sword, my lord," cried Jane, throwing herself between them. "You forget in whose presence you stand."

"No!" exclaimed Northumberland, "I do not forget. I am in the presence of one who owes her authority to me, and who holds it through me. The same power which made you queen, can as readily unmake you."

"Your majesty will now judge who is the traitor," observed Renard, sarcastically.

"I do," she replied. "I command your grace," she continued, authoritatively addressing Northumberland, "to quit the chapel instantly."

"What if I refuse to obey?" rejoined the duke.

"Your grace will do well not to urge me too far," replied Jane. "Obey me, or take the consequences."

"What are they?" cried the duke contemptuously.

"Your arrest," said the Earl of Pembroke, laying his hand upon his sword, and advancing. "If his grace will not submit himself to your highness's authority, we will compel him to do so."

"Jane!" said the duke, suddenly controlling himself, "be warned before it is too late. You are in the hands of those who will destroy you."

"On the contrary," rejoined Renard, "her majesty is in the hands of those who will uphold her, and destroy *you*."

"No more of this," interposed the queen. "If you are, what you profess yourselves, my faithful subjects, you will reconcile your differences."

"Never!" exclaimed the duke. "Let M. Renard look to himself."

"Another such menace, my lord," said Jane, "and I place you in arrest."

"Threatened men live long," observed Renard. "I beseech your majesty not to place any restraint upon his grace."

"Will your highness grant me a moment's speech with you?" said Northumberland, sheathing his sword.

"Not now, my lord," replied Jane. "To-morrow, at the council, you shall be fully heard. And I charge you, by your allegiance, to cease all hostilities till then. Have I your knightly word for this?"

"You have," replied the duke, after a moment's reflection.

"And yours, M. Renard?" continued the queen, turning to him.

"Since his grace has passed his word I cannot withhold mine," replied the ambassador. "But I give it with reluctance."

"Your grace will not fail to attend the council to-morrow," said Jane.

"If your highness desires it I will not, undoubtedly," replied the duke. "But since you decline to act upon my advice, there can be little need for my presence."

"My wishes—my commands are, that you attend," rejoined the queen.

"Your wishes *are* commands," rejoined the duke. "I will be there."

"Enough," replied Jane. "M. Renard, you will accompany me to the palace."

As the ambassador was preparing to depart, he perceived Northumberland's cap lying at his feet.

"Your grace's hat," he observed, pointing to it. And glancing significantly at Jane, he added, in an audible whisper, "Would the head were in it!"

"Ha!" exclaimed the duke, laying his hand upon his sword. "But you are safe till to-morrow."

Renard made no reply, but with a smile of exultation followed the queen out of the chapel.

CHAPTER XI

HOW THE DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND WAS PREVAILED UPON TO UNDERTAKE THE ENTERPRISE AGAINST THE LADY MARY

At noon on the following day, the council was held as appointed by the queen. In the meantime, alarming intelligence having been received of the accession which Mary's party had obtained,

it became absolutely necessary that immediate and decisive measures should be taken against her.

As soon as the lords of the council, including the two ambassadors, Renard and Noailles, were assembled, and the queen had taken her seat upon the throne, the Earl of Pembroke stepped forward, and thus addressed her:—

"It is with infinite concern that I have to apprise your majesty that news has just been brought that Sir Edward Hastings, with an army of four thousand men, has gone over to the Lady Mary. Five counties also have revolted. Your highness is already aware that the Earls of Sussex, Bath, and Oxford, Lord Wentworth, Sir Thomas Cornwallis and Sir Henry Jerningham, have raised the commoners of Suffolk and Norfolk. Lord Windsor, Sir Edmund Peckham, Sir Robert Drury, and Sir Edward Hastings, have now raised those of Buckinghamshire. Sir John Williams and Sir Leonard Chamberlain have stirred up a party in Oxfordshire, and Sir Thomas Tresham another in Northamptonshire. These rebels with their companies are now marching towards Framlingham Castle."

"The revolt must be instantly checked," rejoined Jane. "An army must be sent against her."

"To whom will your majesty entrust its command?" inquired the Earl of Pembroke.

"To one well fitted for the office—my father, the Duke of Suffolk," answered the queen.

"My advice is, that it be given to the Duke of Northumberland," said the Earl of Arundel. "Wherever he has carried his arms—in Scotland and in France—he has been victorious. The recollection of the defeat sustained by the rebels at Dussindale will operate in his favour. His grace has every recommendation for the office. Having achieved the victory of Norfolk once already, he will be so feared that none will dare to lift up a weapon against him. Besides which, I need scarcely remind your highness, who must be familiar with his high reputation, that he is the best man of war in the realm, as well for the ordering of his camps and soldiers, both in battle and in the tent, as for his experience and wisdom, with which he can both animate his army and either vanquish his enemies by his courage and skill, or else dissuade them (if need be) from their enterprise."

"My voice is for Northumberland," cried Cecil.

"And mine," added Huntingdon.

"We are all unanimous," cried the rest of the council.

"Your grace hears the opinion just given," said Jane. "Will you undertake the command?"

"No," answered the duke, bluntly. "I will shed my blood in your majesty's defence. But I see through the designs of your artful council, and will not be made their dupe. Their object is to withdraw me from you. Let the Duke of Suffolk take the command. I will maintain the custody of the Tower."

"Do not suffer him to decline it," whispered Simon Renard to the queen. "By this means you will accomplish a double purpose—insure a victory over Mary, and free yourself from the yoke he will otherwise impose upon you. If the Duke of Suffolk departs, and he is left absolute master of the Tower, you will never attain your rightful position."

"You are right," replied Jane. "My lord," she continued, addressing the duke, "I am satisfied that the council mean you well. And I pray you, therefore, to acquiesce in their wishes and my own."

"Why will not your highness send the Duke of Suffolk, as you have this moment proposed?" rejoined Northumberland.

"I have bethought me," replied the queen. "And as my husband has thought fit to absent himself from me at this perilous juncture, I am resolved not to be left without a protector. Your grace will, therefore, deliver up the keys of the Tower to the Duke of Suffolk."

"Nay, your majesty," cried Northumberland.

"I will have no nay, my lord," interrupted the queen peremptorily. "I will in nowise consent that my father shall leave me. To whom else would your grace entrust the command?"

The duke appeared to reflect for a moment.

"I know no one," he answered.

"Then your grace must perforce consent," said the queen.

"If your majesty commands it, I must. But I feel it is a desperate hazard," replied Northumberland.

"It is so desperate," whispered Pembroke to Renard, "that he has not one chance in his favour."

"The council desire to know your grace's determination?" said Arundel.

"My determination is this," rejoined the duke. "Since you think it good, I will go, not doubting your fidelity to the queen's majesty, whom I shall leave in your custody."

"He is lost!" whispered Renard.

"Your grace's commission for the lieutenantship of the army

shall be signed at once," said Jane; "and I beseech you to use all diligence."

"I will do what in me lies," replied the duke. "My retinue shall meet me at Durham House to-night. And I will see the munition and artillery set forward before daybreak."

A pause now ensued, during which the duke's commission was signed by the whole council.

"It is his death-warrant," observed Renard to the Earl of Arundel.

"Here is your warrant, under the broad seal of England," said the Earl of Pembroke, delivering it to him.

"I must have my marches prescribed," replied the duke. "I will do nothing without authority."

"What say you, my lords?" said Pembroke, turning to them.

"Agree at once," whispered Renard, "he is planning his own ruin."

"Your grace shall have full powers and directions," rejoined Pembroke.

"It is well," replied Northumberland. "My lords," he continued with great dignity, addressing the council, "I and the other noble personages, with the whole army that are now about to go forth, as well for the behalf of you and yours, as for the establishing of the queen's highness, shall not only adventure our bodies and lives amongst the bloody strokes and cruel assaults of our adversaries in the open fields; but also we leave the conservation of ourselves, children and families, at home here with you, as altogether committed to your truth and fidelity. If," he proceeded sternly, "we thought you would through malice, conspiracy, or dissension, leave us, your friends, in the briars and betray us, we could as well, in sundry ways, foresee and provide for our own safety, as any of you, by betraying us, can do for yours. But now, upon the only trust and faithfulness of your honours, whereof we think ourselves most assured, we do hazard our lives. And if ye shall violate your trust and promise, hoping thereby of life and promotion, yet shall not God account you innocent of our bloods, neither acquit you of the sacred and holy oath of allegiance, made freely by you to the queen's highness, who, by your own and our enticement, is rather of force placed therein, than by her own seeking and request. Consider, also, that God's cause, which is the preferment of his word, and fear of Papists' entrance, hath been (as you have heretofore always declared) the original ground whereupon you even at the first motion granted your good wills

and consents thereunto, as by your handwritings appeareth. And think not the contrary. But if ye mean deceit, though not forthwith, yet hereafter, Heaven will revenge the same."

"Your grace wrongs us by these suspicions," observed the Earl of Arundel.

"I will say no more," rejoined the duke, "but in this perilous time wish you to use constant hearts, abandoning all malice, envy, and private affections."

"Doubt it not," said Cecil.

"I have not spoken to you in this sort upon any mistrust I have of your truths," pursued the duke, "of which I have always hitherto conceived a trusty confidence. But I have put you in remembrance thereof, in case any variance should arise amongst you in my absence. And this I pray you, wish me not worse good-speed in this matter than you wish yourselves."

"We shall all agree on one point," observed Pembroke aside to Renard, "and that is a hope that he may never return."

"If your grace mistrusts any of us in this matter, you are deceived," rejoined Arundel, "for which of us can wash his hands of it. And if we should shrink from you as treasonable, which of us can excuse himself as guiltless? Therefore, your doubt is too far cast."

"I pray Heaven it be so," replied the duke, gravely. "Brother of Suffolk, I resign the custody of the Tower to you, entreating you, if you would uphold your daughter's crown, to look well to your charge. I now take my leave of your highness."

"Heaven speed your grace," replied Jane, returning his haughty salutation.

"Farewell, my lord," said the Earl of Arundel, "I am right sorry it is not my chance to bear you company, as I would cheerfully spend my heart's blood in your defence."

"Judas!" muttered the duke.

Upon this, the council broke up, and Jane returned to the palace, accompanied by the Duke of Suffolk, the two ambassadors, and others of the conspiring nobles.

"We may give each other joy," said Pembroke to Renard, as they walked along; "we are at last rid of Northumberland. Suffolk will be easily disposed of."

"Queen Mary shall be proclaimed in London, before to-morrow night," rejoined Renard.

Meanwhile, the duke, attended by the Marquis of Northampton, the Lord Grey, and divers other noblemen, entered his barge, and proceeded to Durham House. On the same night,

he mustered his troops, and made every preparation for his departure. As he rode forth on the following morning through Shoreditch, great crowds collected to see him pass. But they maintained a sullen and ominous silence.

"The people press to see us," observed the duke, in a melancholy tone, to Lord Grey, who rode by his side; "but not one saith God speed us!"

CHAPTER XII

HOW MAGOG BECAME ENAMOURED OF A BUXOM WIDOW, YCLEPED DAME PLACIDA PASTON; HOW HE WENT A-WOOING; AND HOW HE PROSPERED IN HIS SUIT

On the night of the Duke of Northumberland's departure, as the three gigantic warders and their dwarfish attendant were assembled in their lodging in the By-ward Tower, preparatory to their evening meal, the conduct of Magog, which had been strange enough throughout the day, became so very extraordinary and unaccountable, that his brethren began to think he must have taken leave of his senses. Flinging his huge frame on a bench, he sighed and groaned, or rather bellowed, like an over-driven ox, and rolling his great saucer eyes upwards, till the whites only were visible, thumped his chest with a rapid succession of blows, that sounded like the strokes of a sledge-hammer. But the worst symptom, in the opinion of the others, was his inability to eat. Magog's case must, indeed, be desperate, if he had no appetite for supper—and such a supper! Seldom had their board been so abundantly and invitingly spread as on the present occasion—and Magog refused to partake of it. He must either be bewitched, or alarmingly ill.

Supplied by the provident attention of the pantler and his spouse, the repast consisted of a cold chine of beef, little the worse for its previous appearance at the royal board; a mighty lumber pie, with a wall of pastry several inches thick, moulded to resemble the White Tower, and filled with a savoury mess of ham and veal, enriched by a goodly provision of forcemeat balls, each as large as a cannon-shot; a soused gurnet floating in claret; a couple of pullets stuffed with oysters, and served with a piquant sauce of oiled butter and barberries; a skirret pasty; an apple tansy; and a prodigious marrow pudding. Nor, in this bill of fare, must be omitted an enormous loaf,

baked expressly for the giants, and compounded of nearly a bushel of mingled wheaten flour and barley, which stood at one end of the table, while at the opposite extremity was placed a nine-hooped pot of mead, the distance between each hoop denoting a quart of the humming fluid.

But all these good things were thrown away upon Magog. With some persuasion he was induced to take his seat at the table, but after swallowing a single mouthful of the beef, he laid down his knife and fork, and left the rest untasted. In vain Og urged him to try the pullets, assuring him he would find them delicious, as they were cooked by Dame Potentia herself: in vain Gog scooped out the most succulent morsels from the depths of the lumber pie, loading his plate with gobbets of fat and forcemeat balls. He declined both offers with a melancholy shake of the head, and began to sigh and groan more dismally than ever.

Exchanging significant looks with each other, the two giants thought it best to leave him to himself, and assiduously addressed themselves to their own meal. By way of setting him a good example, they speedily cleared the chine to the bone. The gurnet was next despatched; and a considerable inroad made into the lumber pie—three of its turrets having already disappeared—when, as if roused from a trance, Magog suddenly seized the marrow pudding, and devoured it in a trice. He then applied himself to the nine-hooped pot, and taking a long deep draught, appeared exceedingly relieved.

But his calmness was of short duration. The fit almost instantly returned with fresh violence. Without giving the slightest intimation of his intention, he plucked his cap from his brow, and flung it at Xit, who chanced at the moment to be perched upon a stool stirring a great pan of sack posset, set upon a chafing-dish to warm, with such force as to percipitate him over head and ears into the liquid, which, fortunately, was neither hot enough to scald him, nor deep enough to drown him. When he reappeared, the mannikin uttered a shrill scream of rage and terror; and Og, who could not help laughing at his comical appearance, hastened to his assistance, and extricated him from his unpleasant situation.

By the aid of a napkin, Xit was speedily restored to a state of tolerable cleanliness, and though his habiliments were not a little damaged by the viscous fluid in which they had been immersed, he appeared to have suffered more in temper than in any other way from the accident. While Og was rubbing him

dry—perhaps with no very gentle hand—he screamed and cried like a peevish infant undergoing the process of ablution; and he was no sooner set free, than darting to the spot where Magog's cap had fallen, he picked it up, and dipping it in the sack-posset, hurled it in its owner's face. Delighted with this retaliation, he crowed and swaggered about the room, and stamping fiercely upon the ground, tried to draw his sword; but this he found impossible, it being fast glued to the scabbard. Magog, however, paid no sort of attention to his antics, but having wiped his face with the end of the table-cloth, and wrung his bonnet, marched deliberately out of the room. His brothers glanced at each other in surprise, and were hesitating whether to follow, when they were relieved from further anxiety on this score by Xit, who hurried after him. They then very quietly returned to the repast, and trusting all would come right, contented themselves with such interjectional remarks as did not interfere with the process of mastication. In this way they continued, until the return of Xit, who, as he entered the room, exclaimed, with a half-merry, half-mischievous expression of countenance, "I have found it out, I have found it out."

"Found out what?" cried out both giants.

"He is in love," replied the dwarf.

"Magog in love!" ejaculated Og, starting. "Impossible!"

"You shall be convinced to the contrary if you will come with me," rejoined Xit. "I have seen him enter the house. And, what is more, I have seen the lady."

"Who is she?" demanded Gog.

"Can you not guess," rejoined Xit.

"The fair Cicely," returned the giant.

"You are wide of the mark," replied the dwarf, "though, I confess, she is lovely enough to turn his head outright. But he is not so moonstruck as to aspire to *her*. Had I sought her hand, there might have been some chance of success. But Magog—pshaw!"

"Tush!" cried Og, "I will be sworn it is Mistress Bridget Crumbewell, the Bowyer's daughter, who hath bewitched him. I have noted that she hath cast many an amorous glance at him of late. It is she, I'll be sworn."

"Then you are forsworn, for it is *not* Bridget Crumbewell," rejoined Xit; "the object of his affections is a widow."

"A widow!" exclaimed both giants, "then he is lost."

"I see not that," replied the dwarf. "Magog might do worse than espouse Dame Placida Paston. Her husband, old Miles

Paston, left a good round sum behind him, and a good round widow too. She has a bright black eye, a tolerable waist for so plump a person, and as neat an ankle as can be found within the Tower, search where you will. I am half disposed to enter the lists with him."

"Say you so," replied Og, laughing at the dwarf's presumption, "then e'en make the attempt. And such assistance as we can render shall not be wanting; for neither Gog nor I—if I do not misapprehend his sentiments—have any desire that our brother should enter into the holy state of matrimony."

"Right, brother," rejoined Gog; "we must prevent it if possible, and I see not a better way than that you propose. If it does nothing else, it will afford us excellent pastime."

"Excuse me a moment," observed Xit. "If I am to play the suitor to advantage, I must change my dress. I will return on the instant, and conduct you to Dame Placida's dwelling."

So saying, he withdrew for a short space, during which he arrayed himself in his holiday garments. "Magog will have no chance," he observed, as he strutted into the room, and glanced at his pigmy limbs with an air of intense self-satisfaction; "the widow is already won."

"If she be as fond of apes as some of her sex, she is so," replied Og; "but widows are not so easily imposed upon."

The two giants, who, during Xit's absence had entirely cleared the board, and wound up the repast by emptying the nine-hooped pot, now expressed themselves ready to start. Accordingly, they set out, and, preceded by Xit, shaped their course along the southern ward, and passing beneath the gateway of the Bloody Tower, ascended the hill leading to the Green, on the right of which, as at the present time, stood a range of buildings inhabited by the warders and other retainers of the royal household.

Before one of these Xit stopped, and pointing to an open window about six feet from the ground, desired Gog to raise him up to it. The giant complied, when they beheld a sight that filled them with merriment. Upon a stout oak table—for there was no chair in the domicile sufficiently large to sustain him—sat Magog, his hand upon his breast, and his eyes tenderly fixed upon a comely dame, who was presenting him with a large foaming pot of ale. The languishing expression of the giant's large lumpish features was so irresistibly diverting, that it was impossible to help laughing; and the lookers-on only restrained

themselves, in the hope of witnessing something still more diverting.

Dame Placida Paston had a short plump (perhaps a little too plump, and yet it is difficult to conceive how that can well be) figure; a round rosy face, the very picture of amiability and good humour; a smooth chin, dimpling cheeks, and the brightest and merriest black eyes imaginable. Her dress was neatness itself, and her dwelling as neat as her dress. With attractions like these, no wonder she captivated many a heart, and among others that of Magog, who had long nourished a secret passion for her, but could not muster courage to declare it, for, with a bluff and burly demeanour towards his own sex, the giant was as bashful as a shamefaced stripling in the presence of any of womankind.

With the tact peculiarly belonging to widows, Dame Placida had discovered the state of affairs, and perhaps being not altogether unwilling to discourage him, having accidentally met him on the Tower Green on the day in question, had invited him to visit her in the evening. It was this invitation which had so completely upset the love-sick giant. The same bashfulness that prevented him from making known his attachment to the object of it, kept him silent towards his brethren, as he feared to excite their ridicule.

On his arrival at her abode, Dame Placida received him with the utmost cordiality, and tried to engage him in conversation. But all without effect.

"I see how it is," she thought; "there is nothing like a little strong liquor to unloose a man's tongue." And she forthwith proceeded to a cupboard to draw a pot of ale. It was at this juncture that she was discovered by the observers outside.

Magog received the proffered jug, and fixing a tender look on the fair donor, pressed his huge hand to his heart, and drained it to the last drop. The widow took back the empty vessel, and smilingly inquired if he would have it replenished. The giant replied faintly in the negative, so faintly, that she was about to return to the cupboard for a fresh supply, when Magog caught her hand, and flung himself on his knees before her. In this posture he was still considerably the taller of the two; but bending himself as near to the ground as possible, he was about to make his proposal in due form, when he was arrested by a tremendous peal of laughter from without, and, looking up, beheld Xit seated on the window-sill, while behind him appeared the grinning countenances of his brethren.

Ashamed and enraged at being thus detected, Magog sprang to his feet, and seizing Xit by the nape of the neck, would have inflicted some severe chastisement upon him, if Dame Placida had not interfered to prevent it. At her solicitation, the mannikin was released; and he no sooner found himself at liberty, than, throwing himself at her feet, he protested he was dying for her. Perhaps it might be from a certain love of teasing, inherent even in the best-tempered of her sex, or, perhaps, she thought such a course might induce Magog more fully to declare himself; but whatever motive influenced her, certain it is that Dame Placida appeared by no means displeased with her diminutive suitor, but suffered him, after a decent show of reluctance, to take her hand.

Thus encouraged, the dwarf was so elated, that springing upon a chair, he endeavoured to snatch a kiss. But the widow, having no idea of allowing such a liberty, gave him a smart box on the ear, which immediately brought him to the ground.

Notwithstanding this rebuff, Xit would have persevered, had not Magog, whose feelings were really interested, began to appear seriously angry. Seeing this, he judged it prudent to desist, and contented himself with entreating the widow to declare which of the two she preferred. Dame Placida replied, that she must take a few hours to consider upon it, but invited them both to supper on the following evening, when she would deliver her answer. Having given a similar invitation to the two giants outside, she dismissed the whole party

CHAPTER XIII

OF THE STRATAGEM PRACTISED BY CUTHBERT CHOLMONDELEY ON THE JAILER

Several days had now elapsed since Cholmondeley was thrown into the dungeon, and during that time he had been visited only at long intervals by Nightgall. To all his menaces, reproaches, and entreaties, the jailer turned a deaf ear. He smiled grimly as he set down the scanty provisions—a loaf and a pitcher of water—with which he supplied his captive; but he could not be induced to speak. When questioned about Cicely and upbraided with his perfidy, his countenance assumed an exulting expression which Cholmondeley found so intolerable that he never again

repeated his inquiries. Lett to himself, his whole time was passed in devising some means of escape. He tried, but ineffectually, to break his bonds, and at last, satisfied of its futility, gave up the attempt.

One night, he was disturbed by the horrible and heartrending shrieks of the female prisoner, who had contrived to gain access to his cell. There was something about this mysterious person that inspired him with unaccountable dread; and though he was satisfied she was a being of this world, the conviction did not serve to lessen his fears. After making the dungeon ring with her cries for some time, she became silent, and as he heard no sound and could distinguish nothing, he concluded she must have departed. Just then the unlocking of a distant door and a gleam of sickly light on the walls of the stone passage announced the approach of Nightgall, and the next moment he entered the cell. The light fell upon a crouching female figure in one corner. The jailer started; and his angry ejaculations caused the poor creature to raise her head.

Cholmondeley had never beheld anything so ghastly as her countenance, and he half doubted whether he did not look upon a tenant of the grave. Her eyes were sunken and lustreless; her cheeks thin and rigid, and covered with skin of that deadly paleness which is seen in plants deprived of light; her flesh shrunken to the bone, and her hands like those of a skeleton. But in spite of all this emaciation, there was something in her features that seemed to denote that she had once been beautiful, and her condition in life exalted. The terror she exhibited at the approach of the jailer proved the dreadful usage she had experienced. In answer to his savage ejaculations to her to follow him, she flung herself on her knees, and raised her hands in the most piteous supplication. Nothing moved by this, Nightgall was about to seize her and drag her away, when with a piercing scream she darted from him, and took refuge behind Cholmondeley.

"Save me! save me from him!" she shrieked; "he will kill me."

"Pshaw!" cried the jailer. "Come with me quietly, Alexia, and you shall have a warmer cell, and better food."

"I will not go," she replied. "I will not answer to that name. Give me my rightful title and I will follow you."

"What is your title?" asked Cholmondeley, eagerly.

"Beware!" interposed Nightgall, raising his hand menacingly. "Beware!"

"Heed him not!" cried Cholmondeley; "he shall not harm you. Tell me how you are called?"

"I have forgotten," replied the terrified woman, evasively. "I had another name once. But I am called Alexia now."

"What has become of your child?" asked Cholmondeley.

"My child!" she echoed, with a frightful scream. "I have lost her in these dungeons. I sometimes see her before me running and clapping her little hands. Ah! there she is, coming towards us. She has long fair hair, light blue eyes—blue as the skies I shall never behold again. Do you not see her?"

"No," replied Cholmondeley, trembling. "How is she named?"

"She died unbaptised," replied the female. "But I meant to call her Angela. Ah! see! she answers to the name, she approaches. Angela! my child! my child!" And the miserable creature extended her arms, and seemed to clasp a phantom to her bosom.

"Alexia!" roared the jailer, fiercely, "follow me, or I will have you scourged by the tormentor."

"He dare not, he will not," cried Cholmondeley, to whom the wretched woman clung convulsively. "Do not go with him."

"Alexia," reiterated the jailer, in a tone of increased fury.

"I *must* go," she cried, breaking from the esquire, "or he will kill me." And with a noiseless step she glided after Nightgall.

Cholmondeley listened intently, and as upon a former occasion, heard stifled groans succeeded by the clangour of a closing door, and then all was hushed. The jailer returned no more that night. When he appeared again, it was with a moodier aspect than ever. He set down the provisions, and instantly departed.

While meditating upon various means of escape, an idea at length occurred to the young esquire upon whch he resolved to act. He determined to feign death. Accordingly, though half famished, he left his provisions untouched; and when Nightgall next visited the cell, he found him stretched on the ground, apparently lifeless. Uttering a savage laugh, the jailer held the light over the supposed corpse, and exclaimed, "At last I am fairly rid of him. Cicely will now be mine. I will fling him into the burial-vault near the moat. But first to unfasten this chain."

So saying, he took a small key from the bunch at his girdle

and unlocked the massive fetters that bound Cholmondeley to the wall. During this operation the esquire held his breath, and endeavoured to give his limbs the semblance of death. But the jailer's suspicions were aroused.

"He cannot have been long dead," he muttered, "perhaps he is only in a trance. This shall make all secure." And drawing his dagger, he was about to plunge it in the bosom of the esquire, when the latter being now freed from his bondage, suddenly started to his feet, and flung himself upon him.

The suddenness of the action favoured its success. Before Nightgall recovered from his surprise, the poniard was wrested from his grasp and held at his throat. In the struggle that ensued, he received a wound which brought him senseless to the ground; and Cholmondeley, thinking it needless to despatch him, contented himself with chaining him to the wall.

Possessing himself of the jailer's keys, he was about to depart, when Nightgall, who at that moment regained his consciousness, and with it all his ferocity, strove to intercept him. On discovering his situation, he uttered a torrent of impotent threats and execrations. The only reply deigned by the esquire to his menaces, was an assurance that he was about to set free the miserable Alexia.

Quitting the cell, Cholmondeley turned off on the left, in the direction whence he imagined the shrieks had proceeded. Here he beheld a range of low strong doors, the first of which he unlocked with one of the jailer's keys. The prison was unoccupied. He opened the next, but with no better success. It contained nothing except a few rusty links of chain attached to an iron staple driven into the floor. In the third he found a few mouldering bones; and the fourth was totally empty. He then knocked at the doors of others, and called the miserable captive by her name in a loud voice. But no answer was returned.

At the extremity of the passage he found an open door, leading to a small circular chamber, in the centre of which stood a heavy stone pillar. From this pillar projected a long iron bar, sustaining a coil of rope, terminated by a hook. On the ground lay an immense pair of pincers, a curiously-shaped saw, and a brasier. In one corner stood a large oaken frame, about three feet high, moved by rollers. At the other was a ponderous wooden machine, like a pair of stocks. Against the wall hung a broad hoop of iron, opening in the middle with a hinge, a horrible instrument of torture, termed "The Scavenger's Daughter." Near it were a pair of iron gauntlets, which could

be contracted by screws till they crushed the fingers of the wearer. On the wall also hung a small brush to sprinkle the wretched victims who fainted from excess of agony with vinegar; while on a table beneath it were placed writing materials and an open volume, in which were taken down the confessions of the sufferers.

Cholmondeley saw at once that he had entered the torture-chamber, and hastily surveying these horrible contrivances, was about to withdraw, when he noticed a trap-door in one corner. Advancing towards it, he perceived a flight of steps, and thinking they might lead him to the cell he was in search of, he descended, and came to a passage still narrower and gloomier than that he had quitted. As he proceeded along it, he thought he heard a low groan, and hurrying in the direction of the sound, arrived at a small door, and knocking against it, called "Alexia," but was answered in the feeble voice of a man.

"I am not Alexia, but whoever you are, liberate me from this horrible torture, or put me to death, and so free me from misery."

After some search Cholmondeley discovered the key of the dungeon, and unlocking it, beheld an old man in a strange stooping posture, with his head upon his breast, and his back bent almost double. The walls of the cell, which was called the Little Ease, were so low, and so contrived, that the wretched inmate could neither stand, walk, sit, nor lie at full length within them.

With difficulty—for the poor wretch's limbs were too much cramped by his long and terrible confinement to allow him to move—Cholmondeley succeeded in dragging him forth.

"How long have you been immured here?" he inquired.

"I know not," replied the old man. "Not many weeks perhaps, but to me it seems an eternity. Support me—oh! support me! I am sinking fast!"

"A draught of water will revive you," cried Cholmondeley. "I will bring you some in a moment."

And he was about to hurry to his cell for the pitcher, when the old man checked him.

"It is useless," he cried. "I am dying—nothing can save me. Young man," he continued, fixing his glazing eyes on Cholmondeley. "When I was first brought to the Tower, I was as young as you. I have grown old in captivity. My life has been passed in these dismal places. I was imprisoned by the tyrant Henry VIII. for my adherence to the religion of my fathers, and I have witnessed such dreadful things, that, were

I to relate them, it would blanch your hair like mine. Heaven have mercy on my soul!" And, sinking backwards, he expired with a hollow groan.

Satisfied that life was wholly extinct, Cholmondeley continued his search for the scarcely less unfortunate Alexia. Traversing the narrow gallery, he could discover no other door, and he therefore returned to the torture-room, and from thence retraced his steps to the cell. As he approached it, Nightgall, who heard his footsteps, called out to him, and entreated to be set at liberty.

"I will do so, provided you will conduct me to the dungeon of Alexia," replied the esquire.

"You have not found her?" rejoined the jailer.

"I have not," replied Cholmondeley. "Will you guide me to it?"

Nightgall eagerly answered in the affirmative.

The esquire was about to unlock the chain, but as he drew near him, the jailer's countenance assumed so malignant an expression that he determined not to trust him. Despite his entreaties, he again turned to depart.

"You will never get out without me," said Nightgall.

"I will make the attempt," rejoined Cholmondeley. And wrapping himself in the jailer's ample cloak, and putting on his cap, he quitted the dungeon.

This time, he shaped his course differently. Endeavouring to recall the road by which Nightgall had invariably approached, he proceeded for a short time along the onward passage, and presently reaching a spot where two avenues branched off—one to the right and the other to the left—he struck into the latter, and found a second range of dungeons. He opened the doors of several, but they were untenanted; and giving up the idea of rescuing the ill-fated Alexia, he began to think it time to attend to his own safety.

The passage he had chosen, which, like all those he had previously traversed, was arched and flagged with stone, brought him to a low square chamber, from which a flight of steps ascended. Mounting these he came to two other passages, and without pausing to consider, hurried along the first. In a short time he was stopped by a strong iron door, and examining the lock tried every key, but could find none to fit it. Failing to procure egress in this quarter, he was obliged to return, and choosing his course at random, struck into an avenue on the right.

Greatly surprised at the extent of the passages he had tracked, he could not help admiring the extraordinary solidity of the masonry, and the freshness of the stone, which looked as if it had just come from the chisel. Arriving at a gate which impeded his further progress, he applied to his keys, and was fortunately able to open it. This did not set him free as he had anticipated, but admitted him into a spacious vault, surrounded by deep cavernous recesses, filled with stone coffins. Broken statues and tattered escutcheons littered the ground.

Wondering where he could have penetrated, he paused for a moment to consider whether he should return; but fearful of losing his way in the labyrinth he had just quitted, he determined to go on. A broad flight of stone steps led him to a large folding-door, which he pushed aside, and traversing a sort of corridor with which it communicated, he found himself at the foot of a spiral staircase. Mounting it, he came to an extremely narrow passage, evidently contrived in the thickness of the wall; and threading it, he reached a small stone door, in which neither bolt nor lock could be detected.

Convinced, however, that there must be some secret spring, he examined it more narrowly, and at length discovered a small plate of iron. Pressing this, the heavy stone turned as upon a pivot, and disclosed a narrow passage, through which he crept, and found himself to his great surprise in the interior of St. John's Chapel in the White Tower. At first, he thought he must be deceived, but a glance around convinced him he was not mistaken; and when he called to mind the multitude of passages he had traversed, his surprise was greatly diminished.

While he was thus musing, he heard footsteps approaching, and instantly extinguished the light. The masked door from which he had emerged lay at the extremity of the northern aisle, and the parties (for there was evidently more than one) came from the other end of the chapel. Finding he had been noticed, Cholmondeley advanced towards them.

CHAPTER XIV

HOW SIMON RENARD AND THE LORDS OF THE COUNCIL WERE ARRESTED BY LORD GUILFORD DUDLEY

The brief and troubled reign of the ill-fated Queen Jane was fast drawing to a close. Every fresh messenger brought tidings of large accessions to the cause of the Lady Mary, who was now at the head of thirty thousand men—an army trebling the forces of Northumberland. Added to this, the metropolis itself was in a state of revolt. Immense mobs collected in Smithfield, and advanced towards the Tower gates, commanding the warders to open them in the name of Queen Mary. These rioters were speedily driven off, with some bloodshed. But their leader, who was recognised as the prisoner Gilbert, escaped, and the next day larger crowds assembled, and it was feared that an attack would be made upon the fortress.

Meanwhile, Northumberland, whose order of march had been prescribed by the council, proceeded slowly on the expedition; and the fate that attended him fully verified the old proverb, that delay breeds danger. An accident, moreover, occurred, which, while it greatly disheartened his party, gave additional hope to that of the Lady Mary. Six vessels, well manned with troops and ammunition, stationed off Yarmouth to intercept Mary in case she attempted to escape by sea, were driven into that port, where their commanders were immediately visited by Sir Henry Jerningham, who was levying recruits for the princess, and were prevailed upon by him to join her standard.

When the news of this defection reached the Tower, even the warmest partisans of Jane perceived that her cause was hopeless, and prepared to desert her. The Duke of Suffolk could not conceal his uneasiness, and despatched a secret messenger to Lord Guilford Dudley, who during the whole of this trying period had absented himself, commanding his instant return.

On receiving the summons, Dudley immediately answered it in person. Jane received him with the utmost affection, and their meeting, which took place in the presence of her father, the Duchess of Northumberland, and the Ladies Herbert and Hastings, was deeply affecting. Lord Guilford was much moved, and prostrating himself before the queen, besought her forgiveness for his ill-advised and ungenerous conduct, bitterly

reproaching himself for having deserted her at a season of so much peril.

"I will not upbraid you, dear Dudley," rejoined Jane, "neither will I attempt to disguise from you that your absence has given me more anguish than aught else in this season of trouble. My crown you well know was your crown. But now, alas! I fear I have lost that which, though a bauble in my eyes, was a precious jewel in yours."

"Oh, say not so, my queen," replied Lord Guilford, passionately. "Things are not so desperate as you imagine. I have letters full of hope and confidence from my father, who has reached Bury St. Edmund's. He means to give battle to the rebels to-morrow. And the next messenger will no doubt bring news of their defeat."

"Heaven grant it may prove so, my dear lord!" rejoined Jane. "But I am not so sanguine. I have despatched missives to the sheriffs of the different counties, enjoining them to raise troops in my defence, and have summoned the lord mayor and the city authorities to the council to-morrow, to decide upon what is best to be done in this emergency."

"Daughter," said the Duke of Suffolk, "it is my duty to inform you that I have just received letters from his Grace of Northumberland, very different in purport from that which has reached Lord Guilford. In them he expresses himself doubtful of the result of the conflict, and writes most urgently for further succour. His men, he says, are hourly deserting to the hostile camp. And, unless he speedily receives additional force and munition, it will be impossible to engage the enemy."

"This is bad news, indeed, my lord," replied Jane, mournfully.

"Have we not troops to send him?" cried Lord Guilford Dudley. "If a leader is wanted, I will set forth at once."

"We cannot spare another soldier from the Tower," replied Suffolk. "London is in a state of revolt. The fortress may be stormed by the rabble, who are all in favour of Mary. The duke has already taken all the picked men. And, if the few loyal soldiers left are removed, we shall not have sufficient to overawe the rebels."

"My lord," observed the Duchess of Northumberland, "you have allowed the council too much sway. They will overpower you. And your highness," she added, turning to Jane, "has suffered yourself to be deluded by the artful counsels of Simon Renard."

"Simon Renard has given me good counsel," replied Jane.

"You are deceived, my queen," replied her husband. "He is conspiring against your crown and life."

"It is too true," added Suffolk, "I have detected some of his dark practices."

"Were I assured of this," answered Jane, "the last act of my reign—the last exertion of my power—should be to avenge myself upon him."

"Are the guards within the Tower true to us?" inquired Dudley.

"As yet," replied Suffolk. "But they are wavering. If something be not done to confirm them, I fear they will declare for Mary."

"And the council?"

"Are plotting against us, and providing for their own safety."

"Jane," said Lord Guilford Dudley, "I will not attempt to excuse my conduct. But if it is possible to repair the injury I have done you, I will do so. Everything now depends on resolution. The council are more to be feared than Mary and her forces. So long as you are mistress of the Tower, you are mistress of London, and Queen of England, even though the day should go against the duke, my father. Give me a warrant under your hand for the arrest of the council, and the ambassadors Renard and De Noailles, and I will see it instantly executed."

"My lord!" she exclaimed.

"Trust me, my queen, it is the only means to save us," replied Dudley. "This bold step will confound them and compel them to declare their purposes. If they *are* your enemies, as I nothing doubt, you will have them in your power."

"I understand," replied Jane. "You shall have the warrant. It will bring matters to an issue."

At this moment, the door of the chamber was thrown open, and an usher announced "Monsieur Simon Renard."

"You are right welcome, M. Renard," said Lord Guilford, bowing haughtily. "I was about to go in search of you."

"Indeed," rejoined the ambassador, coldly returning the salutation. "I am glad to spare your lordship so much trouble, and I am still more rejoiced to find you have recovered your temper, and returned to your royal consort."

"Insolent!" exclaimed Lord Guilford. "Guards!" he cried, motioning to the attendants, "assure yourselves of his person."

"Ha!" exclaimed Renard, laying his hand upon his sword. "You have no authority for this."

"I have the queen's warrant," rejoined Dudley, sternly.

"The person of an ambassador is sacred," observed Renard. "The emperor, Charles the Fifth, will resent this outrage as an insult to himself."

"I will take the consequences upon myself," replied Lord Guilford, carelessly.

"Your highness will not suffer this wrong to be done?" said Renard, addressing Jane.

"Monsieur Renard," replied the queen, "I have reason to believe you have played me false. If I find you have deceived me, though you were brother to the emperor, you shall lose your head."

"You will have cause to repent this step," rejoined Renard, furiously. "The council will command my instant release."

"The order must be speedy then," replied Dudley, "for I shall place them all in arrest. And here, as luck will have it, are your friends the Earls of Arundel and Pembroke. They will attend you to the White Tower."

So saying, he motioned to the guards to take them into custody.

"What means this?" cried Pembroke in astonishment.

"It means that Lord Guilford Dudley, who has been slumbering for some time in Sion House, has awakened at last, and fancies his royal consort's crown is in danger," rejoined Renard with a bitter sneer.

"This is some jest surely, my lord," observed Pembroke. "The council arrested at a moment of peril like this! Will you provoke us to manifest our power?"

"I will provoke you to manifest your treacherous designs towards her majesty," replied Dudley. "Away with them to the White Tower! Shrewsbury, Cecil, Huntingdon, Darcy, and the others shall soon join you there."

"One word before we go, gracious madam?" said Pembroke, addressing the queen.

"Not one, my lord," replied Jane. "Lord Guilford Dudley has my full authority for what he does. I shall hold early council to-morrow, which you shall be at liberty to attend, and you will then have ample opportunity to explain and defend yourself."

Upon this, the confederate nobles were removed.

"It is time to put an end to this farce," remarked Renard, as they were conducted along the gallery towards the White Tower.

"It is," answered Pembroke, "and my first address in the council to-morrow shall be to proclaim Queen Mary."

"The hair-brained Dudley imagines he can confine us in the White Tower," observed Renard, laughing. "There is not a chamber in it without a secret passage. And thanks to the jailer, Nightgall, I am familiar with them all. We will not be idle to-night."

CHAPTER XV

HOW GUNNORA BRAOSE SOUGHT AN AUDIENCE OF QUEEN JANE

HAVING seen the rest of the council conveyed to the White Tower, Lord Guilford Dudley returned to the palace. While discoursing on other matters with the queen, he casually remarked that he was surprised he did not perceive his esquire, Cuthbert Cholmondeley, in her highness's train, and was answered that he had not been seen since his departure for Sion House. Greatly surprised by the intelligence, Lord Guilford directed an attendant to make inquiries about him. After some time, the man returned, stating that he could obtain no information respecting him.

"This is very extraordinary," said Lord Guilford. "Poor Cholmondeley! What can have happened to him? As soon as this danger is past, I will make personal search for him."

"I thought he had left the Tower with you, my dear lord," observed Jane.

"Would he had!" answered her husband. "I cannot help suspecting he has incurred the enmity of the council, and has been secretly removed. I will interrogate them on the subject to-morrow."

While they were thus conversing, an usher appeared, and informed the queen that a young damsel supplicated an audience, having somewhat to disclose of importance.

"You had better admit her, my queen," said Dudley. "She may have accidentally learned some plot which it is important for us to know."

Jane having signified her assent, the usher withdrew, and presently afterwards introduced Cicely. The young damsel, who appeared to have suffered much, greatly interested the queen by her extreme beauty and modesty. She narrated her story with infinite simplicity, and though she blushed deeply when she came to speak of the love professed for her by Cholmondeley, she attempted no concealment.

Both Jane and Lord Guilford Dudley were astonished beyond measure, when they learned that the young esquire had been incarcerated by Nightgall; and the latter was about to reproach Cicely for not having revealed the circumstances before, when she accounted for her silence by stating that she had been locked within her chamber, ever since the night in question, by her mother. Her story ended, Dudley declared his intention of seeking out the jailer without delay. "I will first compel him to liberate his prisoner," he said, "and will then inflict upon him a punishment proportionate to his offence."

"Alas!" exclaimed Cicely, bursting into tears, "I fear your lordship's assistance will come too late. Nightgall has visited me daily, and he asserts that Master Cholmondeley has quitted the Tower by some secret passage under the moat. I fear he has destroyed him."

"If it be so, he shall die the death he merits," replied Dudley. "You say that the gigantic warders, whose lodging is in the By-ward Tower, are acquainted with the dungeon. I will proceed thither at once. Be of good cheer, fair damsel. If your lover is alive he shall wed you on the morrow, and I will put it out of Nightgall's power to molest you further. Remain with the queen till I return."

"Ay, do so, child," said Jane, "I shall be glad to have you with me. And, if you desire it, you shall remain constantly near my person."

"It is more happiness than I deserve, gracious madam," replied Cicely, dropping upon her knee. "And though your majesty has many attendants more highly born, you will find none more faithful."

"I fully believe it," replied Jane, with a sigh. "Rise, damsel. Henceforth you are one of my attendants."

Cicely replied by a look of speechless gratitude, while, summoning a guard, Dudley proceeded to the By-ward Tower. The giants informed him they had just returned from Nightgall's lodging, and that he was absent. He then commanded them to accompany him to the entrance of the subterranean dungeons beneath the Devilin Tower.

"It will be useless to attempt to gain admission without the keys, my lord," replied Og; "and they are in Master Nightgall's keeping."

"Has no one else a key?" demanded Dudley, impatiently.

"No one, unless it be Gillian Mauger, the headsman," replied Xit; "I will bring him to your lordship, instantly."

So saying, he hurried off in search of the executioner, while Dudley, attended by the two giants, proceeded slowly in the direction of the Beauchamp Tower. In a short time, the dwarf returned with Mauger, who limped after him as quickly as a lame leg would permit. He had no key of the dungeon, and on being questioned, declared there was no other entrance to it.

"Break open the door instantly, then," cried Dudley.

Mauger declared this was impossible, as it was cased with iron, and fastened with a lock of great strength.

Magog, who was standing at a little distance with his arms folded upon his breast, now stepped forward, and, without saying a word, lifted up a large block of stone placed there to repair the walls, and hurling it against the door, instantly burst it open.

"Bravely done," cried Lord Guilford. "How can I reward the service?"

"I scarcely know how to ask it of your lordship," rejoined Magog; "but if you could prevail upon her majesty to issue her commands to Dame Placida Paston to bestow her hand upon me, you would make me the happiest of mankind."

"If the dame be willing, surely she does not require enforcement," replied Dudley, laughing; "and if not"—

"She has half promised her hand to me, my lord," said Xit, "and your lordship can scarcely doubt to whom she would give the preference."

"She has indeed a fair choice betwixt giant and dwarf I must own," replied Dudley. "But bring torches and follow me. More serious business now claims my attention."

"I will guide your lordship through these dungeons," said Xit. "I have often accompanied Master Nightgall in his visits, and can conduct you to every cell."

"Lead on then," said Dudley.

After traversing a vast number of passages, and examining many cells, all of which were vacant, they at length came to the dungeon where Cholmondeley had been confined. Here they found Nightgall, who at first attempted to exculpate himself, and made a variety of wild accusations against the esquire, but when he found he was utterly disbelieved, he confessed the whole truth. Dismissing some of his companions in search of the esquire, who it was evident, if the jailer's statement was to be credited, must have lost himself in some of the passages. Dudley was about to follow them, when Nightgall flung himself at his feet, and offered, if his life were spared, to reveal all the secret practices of the council which had come to his knowledge.

Dudley then ordered the rest of his attendants to withdraw, and was so much astonished at Nightgall's communication that he determined upon instantly conveying him to the palace. After a long, but ineffectual search for Cholmondeley, whose escape has already been related, Dudley contented himself with leaving Xit and Og to look for him; and placing Nightgall in the custody of the two other giants, returned with him to the palace.

While this was passing, the queen had received an unexpected visit. She had retired to her closet with Cicely, and was listening to a recapitulation of the young damsel's love affair, when the hangings were suddenly drawn aside, and Simon Renard stepped from a masked door in the wall. Surprise for a moment held her silent, and Cicely was so much astonished by the appearance of the intruder, and so much alarmed by his stern looks, that she stood like one petrified. Renard's deportment, indeed, was most formidable, and could not fail to impress them both with terror. He said nothing for a moment, but fixed his black flaming eyes menacingly on the queen. As she remained speechless, he motioned Cicely to withdraw, and she would have obeyed had not Jane grasped her arm and detained her.

"Do not leave me!" she cried, "or summon the guard."

The words were no sooner spoken, than Renard drew his sword, and placed himself between her and the door.

"I have little to say," he observed; "but I would have said it to you alone. Since you will have a witness, I am content."

By this time, Jane had recovered her confidence, and rising, she confronted Renard with a look as stern and haughty as his own.

"What brings you here, sir," she demanded; "and by what means have you escaped from the White Tower? Are my guards false to their trust?"

"It matters not how I have escaped," replied Renard. "I am come hither to warn you."

"Of what?" asked Jane.

"Of the peril in which you stand," replied Renard. "You are no longer queen. The Duke of Northumberland has disbanded his army, and has himself proclaimed Mary."

"It is false," rejoined Jane.

"You will do well not to neglect my caution," replied Renard. "As yet the news is only known to me. To-morrow it will be known to all within the Tower. Fly! while it is yet time."

"No," replied Jane, proudly. "Were your news true, which

I doubt, I would *not* fly. If I must resign my crown, it shall not be at your bidding. But I am still a queen; and you shall feel that I am so. Guards!" she cried in a loud voice. "Arrest this traitor."

But before the door could be opened, Renard had darted behind the arras and disappeared. Nor, upon searching the wall, could the attendants discover by what means he had contrived his escape. Soon after this, Lord Guilford Dudley returned, and his rage and consternation when he learned what had occurred was unbounded. He flew to the White Tower, where he found that Simon Renard, De Noailles, and the Earls of Pembroke and Arundel, who had been confined in a small room adjoining the council-chamber, had disappeared. The guards affirmed positively that they were not privy to their flight, and unable to obtain any clue to the mystery, Dudley returned in a state of great perplexity to the palace, where a fresh surprise awaited him.

Jane had scarcely recovered from the surprise occasioned by Renard's mysterious visit, when an usher presented himself, and delivering a ring to her, said that it had been given him by an old woman, who implored an audience. Glancing at the ornament, the queen instantly recognised it as that she had given to Gunnora Braose, and desired the attendant to admit her. Accordingly, the old woman was introduced, and approaching Jane, threw herself on her knees before her.

"What seek you, my good dame?" asked Jane. "I promised to grant any boon you might ask. Are you come to claim fulfilment of my promise?"

"Listen to me, gracious lady," said the old woman, "and do not slight my counsel, for what I am about to say to you is of the deepest import. Your crown—your liberty—your life is in danger! The council mean to depose you on the morrow, and proclaim Mary queen. Call to mind the warning I gave you before you entered this fatal fortress. My words have come to pass. You are betrayed—lost!"

"Rise, my good woman," said Jane, "and compose yourself. You may speak the truth. My enemies may prevail against me, but they shall not subdue me. It is now too late to retreat. Having accepted the crown, I cannot—will not—lay it aside, till it is wrested from me."

"It will be wrested from you on the block, dear lady," cried Gunnora. "Listen to me, I beseech you. To-night you can make your retreat. To-morrow it will be too late."

"It is too late already," cried a stern voice behind them, and Renard again presented himself. He was accompanied by the Earl of Pembroke, and Cholmondeley who was muffled in the jailer's cloak. "Lady Jane Dudley," continued the ambassador, in an authoritative voice, "there is one means of saving your life, and only one. Sign this document;" and he extended a parchment towards her. "It is your abdication. Sign it, and I will procure you a free pardon for yourself and your husband from Queen Mary."

"Mary is *not* queen, nor will I sign it," replied Jane.

"Then hear me," replied Renard. "In Queen Mary's name, I denounce you as an usurper. And if you further attempt to exercise the functions of royalty, you will not escape the block."

"He does not overrate your danger," interposed Gunnora.

"What make you here, old woman?" said Renard, addressing her.

"I have come on the same errand as yourself," she replied, "to warn this noble, but ill-advised lady of her peril."

"Have you likewise informed her why you were brought to the Tower?" demanded Renard, sternly.

"No," replied Gunnora.

"Then she shall learn it from me," continued the ambassador, "though it is not the season I would have chosen for the disclosure. This woman administered poison to your predecessor, Edward VI., by order of the Duke of Northumberland."

"It is false," cried Jane, "I will not believe it."

"It is true," said Gunnora.

"Wretch! you condemn yourself," said Jane.

"I know it," rejoined Gunnora; "but place me on the rack, and I will repeat the charge."

"What motive could the duke have for so foul a crime?" demanded the queen.

"This," replied Gunnora; "he wished to remove the king so suddenly, that the Princesses Mary and Elizabeth might have no intelligence of his decease. But this is not all, madam."

"What more remains to be told?" asked Jane.

"You were to be the next victim," returned the old woman. "Northumberland aimed at the supreme power. With this view, he wedded you to his son; with this view, he procured the letters-patent from King Edward declaring you his successor; with this view, he proclaimed you queen, raised you to the throne, and would have made your husband king. His next step was to have poisoned you."

"Poisoned me!" exclaimed Jane, horror-stricken.

"Ay, poisoned you," repeated Gunnora. "I was to administer the fatal draught to you as I did to Edward. It was therefore I warned you not to enter the Tower. It was therefore I counselled you to resign a sceptre which I knew you could not sustain. I saw you decked out like a victim for the sacrifice, and I strove to avert the fatal blow—but in vain."

"Alas! I begin to find your words are true," replied Jane. "But if aught remains to me of power, if I am not a queen merely in name, I will now exert it. My lord of Pembroke, I command you to summon the guard, and arrest this traitor," pointing to Simon Renard. "I will not sleep till I have had his head. How, my lord, do you refuse to obey me? Hesitate, and you shall share his doom."

At this moment, Cholmondeley threw off his cloak, and advancing towards the ambassador, said, "M. Simon Renard, you are the queen's prisoner."

"Cholmondeley!" exclaimed Renard, starting; "can it be?"

"It is, traitor," replied the esquire; "but I will now unmask you and your projects."

"Back, sir!" cried Renard, in a tone so authoritative that all were overawed by it. "Lay hands upon me, and I give a signal which will cause a general massacre, in which none of Queen Mary's enemies will be spared. Lady Jane Dudley," he continued, addressing her, "I give you till to-morrow to reflect upon what course you will pursue. Resign the crown you have wrongfully assumed, and I pledge my word to obtain your pardon. But Northumberland's life is forfeited, and that of all his race."

"Think you I will sacrifice my husband, traitor?" cried Jane. "Seize him," she added, to Cholmondeley.

But before the young man could advance, Renard had unsheathed his sword, and placed himself in a posture of defence. "Lady Jane Dudley," he ejaculated, "I give you till to-morrow. Your own conduct will decide your fate."

"Call the guard," cried Jane.

The young esquire vainly endeavoured to obey this command, but he was attacked and beaten off by the ambassador and the Earl of Pembroke, who quickly retreating towards the masked door, passed through it and closed it after them. At this juncture, Lord Guilford Dudley returned at the head of the guard. The occurrences of the last few minutes were hastily explained to him, and he was about to break open the secret

door, when Nightgall said, "If I have a free pardon, I will conduct your lordship to the secret retreat of the council, and unravel a plot which shall place them in your power."

"Do this," replied Lord Guilford, "and you shall not only have a free pardon, but a great reward."

"Take a sufficient guard with you, and follow me," rejoined Nightgall.

Dudley complied, and the party proceeded on their errand, while Cholmondeley remained with the queen and Cicely; and although his transports at beholding her again were somewhat alloyed by the perilous position in which Jane stood, he nevertheless tasted sufficient happiness to recompense him in some degree for his recent misery. Withdrawing to another apartment, Jane awaited in the utmost anxiety her husband's return. This did not occur for some hours, and when he appeared she saw at once, from his looks, that his search had been unsuccessful.

The remainder of the night was passed between the queen and her consort in anxious deliberation. Cholmondeley was entrusted with the command of the guard, and after a few hours' rest and other refreshment, of which he stood greatly in need, he proceeded with Lord Clinton, who still apparently remained firm in his adherence, to make the rounds of the Tower. Nothing unusual was noticed: the sentinels were at their posts. But as Cholmondeley looked towards Tower Hill, he fancied he observed a great crowd assembled, and pointed out the appearance to Lord Clinton, who seemed a little confused, but declared he could perceive nothing. Cholmondeley, however, was satisfied that he was not deceived; but apprehending no danger from the assemblage, he did not press the point. Towards daybreak he again looked out in the same quarter, but the mob had disappeared. Meanwhile, Gunnora Braose had been conducted to the Bowyer Tower, and locked within the chamber she had occupied, while Nightgall was placed in strict confinement.

CHAPTER XVI

HOW THE COUNCIL DEPOSED QUEEN JANE; AND HOW SHE FLED FROM THE TOWER

At length, the last morning which was to behold Jane queen dawned, and after an agitated and sleepless night, she addressed herself to her devotions, and endeavoured to prepare for the dangerous and difficult part she had to play. The Duke of

Suffolk tried to persuade her to abdicate. But her husband, who, it has been already observed, inherited his father's ambitious nature, besought her not to part with the crown.

"It has been dearly purchased," he urged, "and must be boldly maintained. Let us meet the council courageously, and we shall triumph."

To this Jane assented. But it was evident from her manner she had but slight hopes.

At an early hour the lord mayor, the aldermen, and all the civic authorities who had been summoned, arrived. Cranmer and Ridley came soon after. The council were then summoned, and by ten o'clock all were assembled, excepting the Earls of Pembroke and Arundel, Simon Renard, and De Noailles. As soon as Jane was seated beneath the state canopy, she ordered a pursuivant to summon them. Proclamation being made, a stir was heard at the lower end of the council-chamber, and the absentees presented themselves. All four advanced boldly towards the throne, and took their place among the council. Jane then arose, and with great dignity and self-possession thus addressed the assemblage:—

"My lords," she said, "I have summoned you, it may be for the last time, to deliberate on the course to be pursued to check the formidable tumults and rebellions that have been moved against me and my crown. Of that crown I cannot doubt I have lawful possession, since it was tendered me by your lordships, who have all sworn allegiance to me. Fully confiding, therefore, in your steadiness to my service, which neither with honour, safety, nor duty, you can now forsake, I look to you for support in this emergency."

Here a murmur arose among the council.

"What!" exclaimed Jane: "do you desert me at the hour of need? Do you refuse me your counsel and assistance?"

"We do," replied several voices.

"Traitors!" exclaimed Lord Guilford Dudley; "you have passed your own sentence."

"Not so, my lord," replied Simon Renard. "It is you who have condemned yourself. Lady Jane Dudley," he continued in a loud voice, "you who have wrongfully usurped the title and station of queen, in your presence I proclaim Mary, sister to the late king Edward the Sixth, and daughter of Henry the Eighth of famous memory, Queen of England and Ireland, and very owner of the crown, government, and title of England and Ireland, and all things thereunto belonging."

"God save Queen Mary!" cried the council.

A few dissentient voices were raised. But the Earl of Pembroke drew his sword, and cried in a loud voice, "As heaven shall help me, I will strike that man dead who refuses to shout for Queen Mary." And he threw his cap in the air.

"Hear me," continued Renard, "and learn that resistance is in vain. I hereby proclaim a free pardon, in Queen Mary's name, to all who shall freely acknowledge her, excepting always the family of the Duke of Northumberland, who is a traitor, and upon whose head a price is set. I require your grace," he added to Suffolk, "to deliver up the keys of the Tower."

"They are here," replied the duke, pointing to Magog who bore them.

"Do you yield, my lord?" cried Lord Guilford, passionately.

"It is useless to contend further," replied Suffolk. "All is lost."

"True," replied Jane. "My lords, I resign the crown into your hands; and Heaven grant you may prove more faithful to Mary than you have been to me. In obedience to you, my lord," she continued, addressing her husband, "I acted a violence on myself, and have been guilty of a grievous offence. But the present is my own act. And I willingly abdicate the throne to correct another's fault, if so great a fault can be corrected by my resignation and sincere acknowledgment."

"You shall not abdicate it, Jane," cried Dudley, fiercely. "I will *not* yield. Stand by me, Cholmondeley, and these audacious traitors shall find I am still master here. Let those who are for Queen Jane surround the throne."

As he spoke, he glanced round authoritatively, but no one stirred.

"Speak!" he cried, in accents of rage and disappointment. "Are ye all traitors? Is no one true to his allegiance?"

But no answer was returned.

"They are no traitors, my lord," said Simon Renard. "They are loyal subjects of Queen Mary."

"He speaks truly, my dear lord," replied Jane. "It is useless to contend further. I am no longer queen."

So saying, she descended from the throne.

"My lords," she continued, addressing the council, "you are now masters here. Have I your permission to retire?"

"You have, noble lady," replied Pembroke. "But it grieves me to add, that you must perforce remain within the Tower till the pleasure of her highness respecting you has been ascertained."

"A prisoner!" exclaimed Jane, trembling. "And my husband, you will suffer him to accompany me?"

"It cannot be," interposed Simon Renard, harshly; "Lord Guilford Dudley must be separately confined."

"You cannot mean this cruelty, sir?" cried Jane, indignantly.

"Do not sue for me, Jane," rejoined Dudley. "I will not accept the smallest grace at his hands."

"Guards!" cried Renard, "I command you, in Queen Mary's name, to arrest Lord Guilford Dudley, and convey him to the Beauchamp Tower."

The order was instantly obeyed. Jane then took a tender farewell of her husband, and accompanied by Cicely and Cholmondeley, and others of her attendants, was escorted to the palace.

She had no sooner taken her departure, than letters were despatched by the council to the Duke of Northumberland, commanding him instantly to disband his army. And the Earl of Arundel was commissioned to proceed with a force to arrest him.

"I have a brave fellow who shall accompany your lordship," said Renard, motioning to Gilbert, who stood among his followers.

"Hark'ee, sirrah!" he added, "you have already approved your fidelity to Queen Mary. Approve it still further by the capture of the duke, and, in the queen's name, I promise you a hundred pounds in lands to you and your heirs, and the degree of an esquire. And now, my lords, to publicly proclaim Queen Mary."

With this the whole train departed from the Tower, and proceeded to Cheapside, where, by sound of trumpet, the new sovereign was proclaimed by the title of "Mary, Queen of England, France, and Ireland, Defender of the Faith."

Shouts rent the air, and every manifestation of delight was exhibited. "Great was the triumph," writes an eye-witness of the ceremony; "for my part, I never saw the like, and, by the report of others, the like was never seen. The number of caps that were thrown up at the proclamation was not to be told. The Earl of Pembroke threw away his cap full of angels. I saw myself money thrown out of the windows for joy. The bonfires were without number; and what with shouting and crying of the people, and ringing of bells, there could no man hear almost what another said, besides banqueting, and skipping the streets for joy."

The proclamation over, the company proceeded to St. Paul's, where Te Deum was solemnly sung. It is a curious illustration of the sudden change of feeling, that the Duke of Suffolk himself proclaimed Mary on Tower Hill.

The utmost confusion reigned throughout the Tower. Some few there were who regretted the change of sovereigns, but the majority were in favour of Mary. Northumberland in fact was so universally hated by all classes, and it was so notorious that the recent usurpation was contrived only for his own aggrandisement, that though Jane was pitied, no commiseration was felt for her husband or her ambitious father-in-law. Great rejoicings were held in the Tower Green, where an immense bonfire was lighted, and a whole ox roasted. Several casks of ale were also broached, and mead and other liquors were distributed to the warders and the troops. Of these good things the three gigantic warders and Xit partook; and Magog was so elated, that he plucked up courage to propose to Dame Placida, and, to the dwarf's infinite dismay and mortification, was accepted. Lord Guilford Dudley witnessed these rejoicings from the windows of the Beauchamp Tower, in which he was confined; and as he glanced upon the citadel opposite his prison, now lighted up by the gleams of the fire, he could not help reflecting with bitterness what a change a few days had effected. The voices which only nine days ago had shouted for Jane, were now clamouring for Mary; and of the thousands which then would have obeyed his slightest nod, not one would acknowledge him now. From a prince he had become a captive, and his palace was converted into a dungeon. Such were the agonising thoughts of Northumberland's ambitious son, and such, or nearly such, were those of his unhappy consort, who, in her chamber in the palace, was a prey to the bitterest reflection.

Attended only by Cholmondeley and Cicely, Jane consumed the evening in sad, but unavailing lamentations. About midnight, as she had composed her thoughts by applying herself to her wonted solace in affliction—study, she was aroused by a noise in the wall, and presently afterwards a masked door opened, and Gunnora Braose presented herself. Jane instantly rose, and demanded the cause of the intrusion. Gunnora laid her finger on her lips, and replied in a low tone, "I am come to liberate you."

"I do not desire freedom," replied Jane, "neither will I trust myself to you. I will abide here till my cousin Mary makes her entrance into the Tower, and I will then throw myself upon her mercy."

"She will show you no mercy," rejoined Gunnora. "Do not, I implore of you, expose yourself to the first outbreak of her jealous and vindictive nature. Queen Mary inherits her father's inexorable disposition, and I am well assured if you tarry here, you will fall a victim to her displeasure. Do not neglect this opportunity, sweet lady. In a few hours it may be too late."

"Accept her offer, gracious madam," urged Cicely, "it may be your last chance of safety. You are here surrounded by enemies."

"But how am I to escape from the fortress, if I accede to your wishes?" replied Jane.

"Follow me, and I will conduct you," answered Gunnora. "I have possessed myself of the key of a subterranean passage which will convey you to the other side of the moat."

"But my husband?" hesitated Jane.

"Do not think of him," interrupted Gunnora, frowning. "He deserted you in the hour of danger. Let him perish on the scaffold with his false father."

"Leave me, old woman," said Jane authoritatively; "I will not go with you."

"Do not heed her, my gracious mistress," urged Cholmondeley, "your tarrying here cannot assist Lord Guilford, and will only aggravate his affliction. Besides, some means may be devised for his escape."

"Pardon what I have said, dear lady," said Gunnora. "Deadly as is the hatred I bear to the house of Northumberland, for your sweet sake I will forgive his son. Nay more, I will effect his deliverance. This I swear to you. Come with me, and once out of the Tower make what haste you can to Sion House, where your husband shall join you before the morning."

"You promise more than you can accomplish," said Jane.

"That remains to be seen, madam," replied Gunnora: "but were it not that he is your husband, Lord Guilford Dudley should receive no help from me. Once more, will you trust me?"

"I will," replied Jane.

Cholmondeley then seized a torch, and fastening the door of the chamber, on the outside of which a guard was stationed, assisted Jane through the masked door. Preceded by the old woman, who carried a lamp, they threaded a long narrow passage built in the thickness of the wall, and presently arrived at the head of a flight of stairs, which brought them to a long

corridor arched and paved with stone. Traversing this, they struck into an avenue on the right, exactly resembling one of those which Cholmondeley had recently explored. Jane expressed her surprise at the vast extent of the passages she was threading, when Gunnora answered, "The whole of the Tower is undermined with secret passages and dungeons, but their existence is known only to few."

A few minutes' rapid walking brought them to a stone staircase, which they mounted, traversed another gallery, and finally halted before a low gothic-arched door, which admitted them to the interior of the Bowyer Tower. Requesting Cholmondeley to assist her, Gunnora, with his help, speedily raised a trap-door of stone, and disclosed a flight of steps. While they were thus employed, a strange and unaccountable terror took possession of Jane. As she glanced timidly towards the doorway she had just quitted, she imagined she saw a figure watching her, and in the gloom almost fancied it was the same muffled object she had beheld in St. John's Chapel. A superstitious terror kept her silent. As she looked more narrowly at the figure, she thought it bore an axe upon its shoulder, and she was about to point it out to her companions, when making a gesture of silence it disappeared. By this time the trap-door being raised, Cholmondeley descended the steps with the torch, while Gunnora holding back the flag, begged her to descend. But Jane did not move.

"Do not lose time," cried the old woman, "we may be followed, and retaken."

Still Jane hesitated. She cast another look towards the doorway, and the idea crossed her, that from that very outlet she should be led to execution. A deadly chill pervaded her frame, and her feet seemed nailed to the ground. Seeing her irresolution, Cicely threw herself on her knees before her, and implored her to make an effort. Jane advanced a step, and then paused. After remaining a moment in deep abstraction, she turned to Cicely, and said—

"Child, I thank you for your zeal, but I feel it is useless. Though I may escape from the Tower, I *cannot* escape my fate."

Cicely, however, renewed her entreaties, and seconded by Cholmondeley she at length prevailed. Pursuing the same course which Gunnora had taken on the night she was brought to the Tower by Simon Renard, they at length arrived at the shed at the further side of the moat.

"You are now safe," said Gunnora. "Hasten to Sion House,

and if my plan does not fail, your husband shall join you there before many hours have passed."

So saying, she departed. Jane and her attendants crossed Tower Hill, from which she turned to gaze at the scene of her greatness, indistinctly visible in the gloom—and so agonising were the thoughts occasioned by the sight that she burst into tears. As soon as she had recovered from her paroxysm of grief, they proceeded to the river side, where they fortunately procured a boat, and were rowed towards Sion House.

CHAPTER XVII

IN WHAT MANNER JANE WAS BROUGHT BACK TO THE TOWER OF LONDON

GUNNORA BRAOSE kept her word. Before daybreak, Lord Guilford Dudley joined his afflicted consort. Their meeting was passionate and sad. As Jane ardently returned her husband's fond embrace, she cried, "Oh, my dear lord, that we had never been deluded by the false glitter of greatness to quit this calm retreat! Oh that we may be permitted to pass the remainder of our days here!"

"I have not yet abandoned all hopes of the throne," replied Dudley. "Our fortunes may be retrieved."

"Never," returned Jane, gravely, "never so far as I am concerned. Were the crown to be again offered to me, were I assured I could retain it, I would not accept it. No, Dudley, the dream of ambition is over; and I am fully sensible of the error I have committed."

"As you please, my queen, for I will still term you so," rejoined Dudley; "but if my father is in arms, I will join him, and we will make one last effort for the prize, and regain it, or perish in the attempt."

"Your wild ambition will lead you to the scaffold and will conduct me there, also," replied Jane. "If we could not hold the power when it was in our own hands, how can you hope to regain it?"

"It is *not* lost, I will not believe it, till I am certified under my father's own hand that he has abandoned the enterprise," rejoined Dudley. "You know him not, Jane. With five thousand men at his command, nay, with a fifth of that number, he is more than a match for all his enemies. We shall yet live

to see him master of the Tower—of this rebellious city. We shall yet see our foes led to the scaffold. And if I see the traitors, Renard, Pembroke, and Arundel, conducted thither I will excuse Fortune all her malice."

"Heaven forgive them their treason as I forgive them!" exclaimed Jane. "But I fear their enmity will not be satisfied till they have brought us to the block to which you would doom them."

"This is not a season for reproaches, Jane," said Dudley, coldly; "but if you had not trusted that false traitor, Renard—if you had not listened to his pernicious counsels—if you had not refused my suit for the crown, and urged my father to undertake the expedition against Mary—all had been well. You had been queen—and I king."

"Your reproaches are deserved, Dudley," replied Jane, "and you cannot blame me more severely than I blame myself. Nevertheless, had I acceded to your desires, had I raised you to the sovereignty, had I turned a deaf ear to Renard's counsel, and not suffered myself to be duped by his allies Arundel and Pembroke, had I retained your father in the Tower, my reign would not have been of much longer duration."

"I do not understand you, madam," said Lord Guilford, sternly.

"To be plain, then," replied Jane, "for disguise is useless now, I am satisfied that your father aimed at the crown himself, that I was merely placed on the throne to prepare it for him, and that when the time arrived, he would have removed me."

"Jane!" exclaimed her husband, furiously.

"Have patience, dear Dudley!" she rejoined. "I say not this to rouse your anger, or to breed further misunderstanding between us. Heaven knows we have misery enough to endure without adding to it. I say it to reconcile you to your lot. I say it to check the spirit of ambition which I find is yet smouldering within your bosom. I say it to prevent your joining in any fresh attempt with your father, which will assuredly end in the destruction of both."

"But you have brought a charge so foul against him, madam," cried her husband, "that as his son, I am bound to tell you you are grievously in error."

"Dudley," replied Jane, firmly, "I have proofs that the duke poisoned my cousin, King Edward. I have proofs also, that he would have poisoned me."

"It is false," cried her husband, furiously; "it is a vile

calumny fabricated by his enemies. You have been imposed upon."

"Not so, my lord," cried Gunnora Braose, who had been an unseen listener to the conversation. "It is no calumny. The royal Edward was poisoned by me at your father's instigation. And you and your consort would have shared the same fate."

"False hag! thou liest," cried Lord Guilford.

"Read that," replied Gunnora, placing a document in his hands. "It is my order in the duke's own writing. Do you credit me now."

Dudley hastily cast his eyes over the scroll. His countenance fell, and the paper dropped from his grasp.

"And now hear my news," continued the old woman, with a smile of exultation. "Your father has proclaimed Queen Mary at Cambridge."

"Impossible!" cried Dudley.

"I tell you it is true," replied Gunnora; "a messenger arrived at midnight with the tidings, and it was during the confusion created by the intelligence that I contrived to effect your escape. The Earl of Arundel is despatched to arrest him, and, ere to-morrow night, he will be lodged within the Tower. Yes," she continued with a ferocious laugh, "I shall see him placed in the same dungeon in which he lodged my foster-son, the great Duke of Somerset. I shall see his head stricken off by the same axe, and upon the same scaffold, and I shall die content."

"Horrible!" cried Jane. "Leave us, wretched woman. Your presence adds to my affliction."

"I will leave you, dear lady," replied Gunnora, "but though absent from you, I will not fail to watch over you. I have powerful friends within the Tower, and if any ill be designed you, I will give you timely warning. Farewell!"

A miserable and anxious day was passed by Jane and her husband. Lord Guilford would fain have departed with Cholmondeley to join his father at Cambridge, but suffered himself to be dissuaded from the rash undertaking, by the tears and entreaties of his consort. As to Cicely and her lover, their sympathies were so strongly excited for the distresses of Jane, that the happiness they would otherwise have experienced in each other's society was wholly destroyed. At night, as the little party were assembled, Gunnora Braose again made her appearance, and her countenance bespoke that some new danger was at hand.

"What ill tidings do you bring?" cried Dudley, starting to his feet.

"Fly!" exclaimed Gunnora. "You have not a moment to lose. Simon Renard has discovered your retreat, and Lord Clinton, with a body of men, is hastening hither to convey you to the Tower. Fly!"

"Whither?" exclaimed Lord Guilford. "Whither shall we fly?"

"It is useless, my dear lord," replied Jane, calmly, "to contend further. I resign myself to the hands of Providence, and I counsel you to do the same."

"Come then with me, Cholmondeley," cried Dudley, snatching up his cloak, and girding on his sword, "we will to horse at once, and join my father at Cambridge. If he has a handful of men left we can yet make a gallant defence."

"The duke is arrested, and on his way to the Tower," said Gunnora.

"Ha!" exclaimed Dudley, "when did this occur?"

"Yesterday," replied the old woman. "He was taken within his chamber by my grandson, Gilbert Pot, who has received a hundred pounds in lands, and the degree of an esquire, for the deed. He submitted himself to the Earl of Arundel, and his deportment was as abject as it formerly was arrogant. When he saw the earl, he fell on his knees, and desired him to have pity on him for the love of God. 'Consider,' he said, 'I have done nothing but by the order of you and the whole council.' Then the Earl of Arundel replied, 'I am sent hither by the queen's majesty, and in her name I arrest you.' 'And I obey it, my lord,' answered the duke. 'I beseech you use mercy towards me, knowing the case as it is.' 'My lord,' rejoined the earl, 'you should have sought mercy sooner. I must do according to my commandment. You are my prisoner!' And he committed him in charge to my grandson and others of the guard."

"How learnt you this?" inquired Lord Guilford.

"From a messenger who has just arrived at the Tower," replied the old woman, "and this is the last act of the great Duke of Northumberland. We shall soon see how he comports himself on the scaffold."

"Begone," cried Jane, "and do not stay here to deride our misery."

"I am not come hither to deride it," replied the old woman, "but to warn you."

"I thank you for your solicitude," replied Jane, "but, it is needless. Retire all of you, I entreat, and leave me with my husband."

Her injunctions were immediately complied with, and her attendants withdrew. The unfortunate pair were not, however, allowed much time for conversation. Before they had been many minutes alone, the door was burst open, and a troop of armed men headed by Lord Clinton, the lieutenant of the Tower, rushed in.

"I am aware of your errand, my lord," said Jane; "you are come to convey me to the Tower. I am ready to attend you."

"It is well," replied Lord Clinton. "If you have any preparations to make, you shall have time for them."

"I have none, my lord," she replied.

"Nor I," replied Lord Guilford.

"My sole request is, that I may take one female attendant with me," said Jane, pointing to Cicely.

"I am sorry I cannot comply with the request," answered Lord Clinton, "but my orders are peremptory."

"Will my esquire be permitted to accompany me?" inquired Dudley.

"If he chooses to incur the risk of so doing, assuredly," replied Clinton. "But he will go into captivity."

"I will follow my Lord Guilford to death," cried Cholmondeley.

"You are a faithful esquire, indeed!" observed Lord Clinton, with a slight sneer.

While this was passing, Cicely hastily threw a surcoat of velvet over her mistress's shoulders, to protect her from the night air, and then prostrating herself before her, clasped her hand, and bedewed it with tears.

"Rise, child," said Jane, raising her and embracing her. "Farewell! may you be speedily united to your lover, and may your life be happier than that of your unfortunate mistress!"

"My barge awaits you at the stairs," observed Lord Clinton.

"We will follow you, my lord," said Dudley.

Leaning upon Cicely, Jane, who was scarcely able to support herself, was placed in the stern of the boat. Her husband took his seat near her, and two men-at-arms, with drawn swords, were stationed as a guard on either side of them. Bidding a hasty adieu to the weeping Cicely, Cholmondeley sprang into the boat, and was followed by Clinton, who immediately gave the signal to the rowers. Cicely lingered till the bark disappeared, and as two halberdiers bearing torches were placed

in the fore part of the vessel, she was enabled to track its course far down the river. When the last glimmer of light vanished, her heart died within her, and she returned to indulge her grief in solitude.

Meanwhile, the boat with its unhappy occupants pursued a rapid course. The tide being in their favour they shortly reached London, and as they swept past Durham House, whence, only twelve days ago, she had proceeded in so much pomp to the Tower, Jane's feelings became too poignant almost for endurance. The whole pageant rose before her in all its splendour. Again she heard the roar of the cannon announcing her departure. Again she beheld the brilliant crowd of proud nobles, gaily-dressed cavaliers, lovely and high-born dames, grave prelates, judges and ambassadors. Again she beheld the river glistening with golden craft. Again she heard the ominous words of Gunnora, "*Go not to the Tower!*" Again she beheld the fierce lightning flash, again heard the loud thunder roll, and she felt she had received a deep and awful warning. These thoughts affected her so powerfully, that she sank half fainting on her husband's shoulder.

In this state she continued till they had shot London Bridge, and the first object upon which her gaze rested, when she opened her eyes, was the Tower.

Here again other harrowing recollections arose. How different was the present from her former entrance into the fortress! Then a deafening roar of ordnance welcomed her. Then all she passed saluted her as queen. Then drawbridges were lowered, gates opened, and each vied with the other to show her homage. Then a thousand guards attended her. Then allegiance was sworn—fidelity vowed—but how kept? Now all was changed. She was brought a prisoner to the scene of her former grandeur, unattended, unnoted.

Striving to banish these reflections, which, in spite of her efforts, obtruded themselves upon her, she strained her gaze to discover through the gloom the White Tower, but could discern nothing but a sombre mass like a thunder-cloud. St. Thomas's, or Traitor's Tower was, however, plainly distinguishable, as several armed men carrying flambeaux were stationed on its summit.

The boat was now challenged by the sentinels, merely as a matter of form, for its arrival was expected, and almost before the answer could be returned by those on board, a wicket, composed of immense beams of wood, was opened, and the boat

shot beneath the gloomy arch. Never had Jane experienced a feeling of such horror as now assailed her, and if she had been crossing the fabled Styx she could not have felt greater dread. Her blood seemed congealed within her veins as she gazed around. The lurid light of the torches fell upon the black dismal arch, upon the slimy walls, and upon the yet blacker tide. Nothing was heard but the sullen ripple of the water, for the men had ceased rowing, and the boat impelled by their former efforts soon struck against the steps. The shock recalled Jane to consciousness. Several armed figures bearing torches were now seen to descend the steps. The customary form of delivering the warrant, and receiving an acknowledgment for the bodies of the prisoners being gone through, Lord Clinton, who stood upon the lowest step, requested Jane to disembark. Summoning all her resolution, she arose, and giving her hand to the officer, who stood with a drawn sword beside her, was assisted by him and a warder to land. Lord Clinton received her as she set foot on the step. By his aid she slowly ascended the damp and slippery steps, at the summit of which two personages were standing, whom she instantly recognised as Renard and De Noailles. The former regarded her with a smile of triumph, and said in a tone of bitter mockery as she passed him, "So—Epiphany is over. The Twelfth Day Queen has played her part."

"My lord," said Jane, turning disdainfully from him to Lord Clinton, "will it please you to conduct me to my lodging?"

"What ho! warders," cried Lord Clinton, addressing the gigantic brethren who were standing near, "conduct Lady Jane Dudley to Master Partridge's dwelling till her chamber within the Brick Tower is prepared. Lord Guilford Dudley must be taken to the Beauchamp Tower."

"Are we to be separated?" cried Jane.

"Such are the queen's commands," replied Lord Clinton, in a tone of deep commiseration.

"The queen's!" exclaimed Jane.

"Ay! the queen's!" repeated Renard. "Queen Mary of England, whom Heaven long preserve!"

THUS FAR THE FIRST BOOK OF THE CHRONICLE OF THE TOWER OF LONDON

BOOK THE SECOND

MARY THE QUEEN

CHAPTER I

OF THE ARRIVAL OF QUEEN MARY IN LONDON; OF HER ENTRANCE INTO THE TOWER; AND OF HER RECEPTION OF THE PRISONERS ON THE GREEN

Mary made her public entry into the city of London, on the 3rd of August, 1553. The most magnificent preparations were made for her arrival, and as the procession of the usurper—for such Jane was now universally termed—to the Tower had been remarkable for its pomp and splendour, it was determined, on the present occasion, to surpass it. The queen's entrance was arranged to take place at Aldgate, and the streets along which she was to pass were covered with fine gravel from thence to the Tower, and railed on either side. Within the rails stood the crafts of the city, in the dresses of their order; and at certain intervals were stationed the officers of the guard and their attendants, arrayed in velvet and silk, and having great staves in their hands to keep off the crowd. Hung with rich arras, tapestry, carpets, and, in some instances, with cloths of tissue gold and velvet, the houses presented a gorgeous appearance. Every window was filled with richly-attired dames, while the roofs, walls, gables, and steeples were crowded with curious spectators. The tower of the old church of Saint Botolph, the ancient walls of the city, westward as far as Bishopgate, and eastward to the Tower postern, were thronged with beholders. Every available position had its occupant. St. Catherine Coleman's in Fenchurch Street—for it was decided that the royal train was to make a slight detour—Saint Dennis Backchurch; Saint Benet's; All Hallows, Lombard Street; in short, every church, as well as every other structure, was covered.

The queen, who had passed the previous night at Bow, set forth at noon, and in less than an hour afterwards, loud acclamations, and still louder discharges of ordnance, announced her

approach. The day was as magnificent as the spectacle—the sky was deep and cloudless, and the sun shone upon countless hosts of bright and happy faces. At the bars without Aldgate, on the Whitechapel road, Queen Mary was met by the Princess Elizabeth, accompanied by a large cavalcade of knights and dames. An affectionate greeting passed between the royal sisters, who had not met since the death of Edward, and the usurpation of Jane, by which both their claims to the throne had been set aside. But it was noted by those who closely observed them, that Mary's manner grew more grave as Elizabeth rode by her side. The queen was mounted upon a beautiful milk-white palfrey, caparisoned in crimson velvet, fringed with golden thread. She was habited in a robe of violet-coloured velvet, furred with powdered ermine, and wore upon her head a caul of cloth of tinsel set with pearls, and above this a massive circlet of gold covered with gems of inestimable value. Though a contrary opinion is generally entertained, Mary was not without some pretension to beauty. Her figure was short and slight, but well proportioned; her complexion rosy and delicate; and her eyes bright and piercing, though, perhaps, too stern in their expression. Her mouth was small, with thin compressed lips, which gave an austere and morose character to an otherwise pleasing face. If she had not the commanding port of her father, Henry the Eighth, nor the proud beauty of her mother, Catherine of Arragon, she inherited sufficient majesty and grace from them to well fit her for her lofty station.

No one has suffered more from misrepresentation than this queen. Not only have her failings been exaggerated, and ill qualities, which she did not possess, attributed to her, but the virtues that undoubtedly belonged to her have been denied her. A portrait, perhaps too flatteringly coloured, has been left of her by Michele, but still it is nearer the truth than the darker presentations with which we are more familiar. "As to the more important qualities of her mind, with a few trifling exceptions (in which, to speak the truth, she is like other women, since besides being hasty and somewhat resentful, she is rather more parsimonious and miserly than is fitting a munificent and liberal sovereign), she has in other respects no notable imperfection, and in some things she is without equal; for not only she is endowed with a spirit beyond other women who are naturally timid, but is so courageous and resolute that no adversity nor danger ever caused her to betray symptoms of pusillanimitv. On the contrary, she has ever preserved a greatness

of mind and dignity that is admirable, knowing as well what is due to the rank she holds as the wisest of her councillors, so that in her conduct and proceedings during the whole of her life, it cannot be denied she has always proved herself to be the offspring of a truly royal stock. Of her humility, piety, and observance of religious duties, it is unnecessary to speak, since they are well known, and have been proved by sufferings little short of martyrdom; so that we may truly say of her with the cardinal, that amidst the darkness and obscurity which overshadowed this kingdom, she remained like a faint flame strongly agitated by winds which strove to extinguish it, but always kept alive by her innocence and true faith, in order that she might one day shine to the world, as she now does." Other equally strong testimonies to her piety and virtue might be adduced. By Camden she is termed a "lady never sufficiently to be praised for her sanctity, charity, and liberality." And by Bishop Godwin, "a woman truly pious, benign, and of most chaste manners, and to be lauded, if *you do not regard her failure in religion.*" It was this "failure in religion" which has darkened her in the eyes of her Protestant posterity. With so many good qualities it is to be lamented that they were overshadowed by bigotry.

If Mary did not possess the profound learning of Lady Jane Grey, she possessed more than ordinary mental acquirements. A perfect mistress of Latin, French, Spanish, and Italian, she conversed in the latter language with fluency. She had extraordinary powers of eloquence when roused by any great emotion, and having a clear logical understanding, was well fitted for argument. Her courage was undaunted; and she possessed much of the firmness of character—obstinacy it might perhaps be termed—of her father. In the graceful accomplishment of the dance she excelled, and was passionately fond of music, playing with skill on three instruments, the virginals, the regals, and the lute. She was fond of equestrian exercise, and would often indulge in the chase. She revived all the old sports and games which had been banished as savouring of mummery by the votaries of the reformed faith. One of her sins in their eyes was a fondness for rich apparel. In the previous reign female attire was remarkable for its simplicity. She introduced costly stuffs, sumptuous dresses, and French fashions.

In personal attractions the Princess Elizabeth far surpassed her sister. She was then in the bloom of youth, and though she could scarcely be termed positively beautiful, she had a very

striking appearance, being tall, portly, with bright blue eyes, and exquisitely formed hands, which she took great pains to display.

As soon as Elizabeth had taken her place behind the queen, the procession set forward. The first part of the cavalcade consisted of gentlemen clad in doublets of blue velvet, with sleeves of orange and red, mounted on chargers trapped with close housings of blue sarsenet powdered with white crosses. After them rode esquires and knights, according to their degree, two and two, well mounted, and richly apparelled in cloth of gold, silver, or embroidered velvet, "fresh and goodlie to behold." Then came the trumpeters, with silken pennons fluttering from their clarions, who did their devoir gallantly. Then a litter covered with cloth of gold, drawn by richly-caparisoned horses, and filled by sumptuously-apparelled dames. Then an immense retinue of nobles, knights, and gentlemen, with their attendants, all dressed in velvets, satins, taffeties, and damask of all colours, and of every device and fashion—there being no lack of cloths of tissue, gold, silver, embroidery, or goldsmith's work. Then came forty high-born damsels mounted on steeds, trapped with red velvet, arrayed in gowns and kirtles of the same material. Then followed two other litters covered with red satin. Then came the queen's bodyguard of archers, clothed in scarlet, bound with black velvet, bearing on their doublets a rose woven in gold, under which was an imperial crown. Then came the judges; then the doctors; then the bishops; then the council; and, lastly, the knights of the Bath in their robes.

Before the queen rode six lords, bare-headed, four of whom carried golden maces. Foremost amongst these rode the Earls of Pembroke and Arundel, bearing the arms and crown. They were clothed in robes of tissue, embroidered with roses of fine gold, and each was girt with a baldrick of massive gold. Their steeds were trapped in burnt silver, drawn over with cords of green silk and gold, the edges of their apparel being fretted with gold and damask. The queen's attire has been already described. She was attended by six lacqueys habited in vests of gold, and by a female attendant in a grotesque attire, whom she retained as her jester, and who was known among her household by the designation of Jane the Fool. The Princess Elizabeth followed, after whom came a numerous guard of archers and arquebusiers. The retinue was closed by the train of the ambassadors, Noailles and Renard. A loud discharge of ordnance announced the queen's arrival at Aldgate. This was immediately answered

by the Tower guns, and a tremendous and deafening shout rent the air. Mary appeared greatly affected by this exhibition of joy, and as she passed under the ancient gates which brought her into the city, and beheld the multitudes assembled to receive her, and heard their shouts of welcome, she was for a moment overcome by her feelings. But she speedily recovered herself, and acknowledged the stunning cries with a graceful inclination of her person.

Upon a stage on the left, immediately within the gate, stood a large assemblage of children, attired like wealthy merchants, one of whom—who represented the famous Whittington—pronounced an oration to the queen, to which she vouchsafed a gracious reply. Before this stage was drawn up a little phalanx, called the "Nine children of honour." These youths were clothed in velvet, powdered with flowers-de-luce, and were mounted on great coursers, each of which had embroidered on its housing a scutcheon of the queen's title, as of England, France, Gascony, Guienne, Normandy, Anjou, Cornwall, Wales, and Ireland. As soon as the oration was ended, the lord mayor, aldermen, sheriffs, and their officers and attendants, rode forth to welcome the queen to the city. The lord mayor was clothed in a gown of crimson velvet, decorated with the collar of SS., and carried the mace. He took his place before the Earl of Arundel, and after some little delay the cavalcade was again set in motion. First marched the different civic crafts, with bands of minstrelsy and banners; then the children who had descended from the stage; then the nine youths of honour; then the city guard; and then the queen's cavalcade as before described.

Mary was everywhere received with the loudest demonstrations of joy. Prayers, wishes, welcomings, and vociferations attended her progress. Nothing was heard but "God save your highness; God send you a long and happy reign." To these cries, whenever she could make herself heard, the queen rejoined, "God save you, all my people. I thank you with all my heart." Gorgeous pageants were prepared at every corner. The conduits ran wine. The crosses and standards in the city were newly painted and burnished. The bells pealed, and loud-voiced cannon roared. Triumphal arches covered with flowers, and adorned with banners, targets, and rich stuffs, crossed the streets. Largesse was showered among the crowd with a liberal hand, and it was evident that Mary's advent was hailed on all hands as the harbinger of prosperity. The train proceeded

along Fenchurch Street, where was a "marvellous cunning" pageant, representing the fountain of Helicon, made by the merchants of the Stillyard; the fountain "ran abundantly-racked Rhenish wine till night." At the corner of Gracechurch Street there was another pageant, raised to a great height, on the summit of which were four pictures; above these stood an angel robed in green, with a trumpet to its mouth, which was sounded at the queen's approach, to the "great marvelling of many ignorant persons." Here she was harangued by the recorder; after which the chamberlain presented her with a purse of cloth of gold, containing a thousand marks. The purse she graciously received, but the money she distributed among the assemblage. At the corner of Gracechurch Street another stage was erected. It was filled with the loveliest damsels that could be found, with their hair loosened and floating over their shoulders, and carrying large branches of white wax. This was by far the prettiest spectacle she had witnessed, and elicited Mary's particular approbation. Her attention, however, was immediately afterwards attracted to the adjoining stage, which was filled with Romish priests in rich copes, with crosses and censers of silver, which they waved as the queen approached, while an aged prelate advanced to pronounce a solemn benediction upon her. Mary immediately dismounted, and received it on her knees. This action was witnessed with some dislike by the multitude, and but few shouts were raised as she again mounted her palfrey. But it was soon forgotten, and the same cheers that had hitherto attended her accompanied her to the Tower. Traversing Eastcheap, which presented fresh crowds, and offered fresh pageants to her view, she entered Tower Street, where she was welcomed by larger throngs than before, and with greater enthusiasm than ever. In this way she reached Tower Hill, where a magnificent spectacle burst upon her.

The vast area of Tower Hill was filled with spectators. The crowds who had witnessed her entrance into the city had now flocked thither, and every avenue had poured in its thousands, till there was not a square inch of ground unoccupied. Many were pushed into the moat, and it required the utmost exertion of the guards, who were drawn out in lines of two deep, to keep the road which had been railed and barred from the end of Tower Street to the gates of the fortress clear for the queen. As Mary's eye ranged over this sea of heads, as she listened to their stunning vociferations, and to the loud roar of the cannon which broke from every battlement in the Tower, her heart swelled

with exultation. It was an animating spectacle. The day, it has been said, was bright and beautiful. The sun poured down its rays upon the ancient fortress, which had so lately opened its gates to an usurper, but which now like a heartless rake had cast off one mistress to take another. The whole line of ramparts on the west was filled with armed men. On the summit of the White Tower floated her standard, while bombard and culverin kept up a continual roar from every lesser tower.

After gazing for a few moments in the direction of the lofty citadel, now enveloped in the clouds of smoke issuing from the ordnance, and, excepting its four tall turrets and its standard, entirely hidden from view, her eyes followed the immense cavalcade, which, like a swollen current, was pouring its glittering tide beneath the arch of the Bulwark Gate; and as troop after troop disappeared, and she gradually approached the fortress, she thought she had never beheld a sight so grand and inspiriting. Flourishes of trumpets, almost lost in the stunning acclamations of the multitude, and the thunder of artillery, greeted her arrival at the Tower. Her entrance was conducted with much ceremony. Proceeding through closely-serried ranks of archers and arquebusiers, she passed beneath the Middle Gate and across the bridge. At the By-ward Tower she was received by Lord Clinton and a train of nobles. On either side of the gate stood Gog and Magog. Both giants made a profound obeisance as she passed. A few steps further, her course was checked by Og and Xit. Prostrating himself before her, the elder giant assisted his diminutive companion to clamber upon his back, and as soon as he had gained this position, the dwarf knelt down and offered the keys of the fortress to the queen. Mary was much diverted at the incident, nor was she less surprised at the vast size of Og and his brethren than at the resemblance they presented to her royal father. Guessing what was passing through her mind, and regardless of consequences as of decorum, Xit remarked—

"Your majesty, I perceive, is struck with the likeness of my worthy friend Og to your late sire King Henry the Eighth, of high and renowned memory. You will not, therefore, be surprised, when I inform you that he is his—"

Before another word could be uttered, Og, who had been greatly alarmed at the preamble, arose with such suddenness, that Xit was precipitated to the ground.

"Pardon mé, your majesty," cried the giant, in great confusion, "it is true what the accursed imp says. I have the honour

to be indirectly related to your highness. God's death, sirrah, I have half a mind to set my foot upon thee and crush thee. Thou art ever in mischief."

The look and gesture, which accompanied this exclamation, were so indescribably like their royal parent, that neither the queen nor the Princess Elizabeth could forbear laughing.

As to Xit, the occurrence gained him a new friend in the person of Jane the Fool, who ran up as he was limping off with a crest-fallen look, and begged her majesty's permission to take charge of him. This was granted, and the dwarf proceeded with the royal cortège. On learning the name of his protectress, Xit observed—

"You are wrongfully designated, sweetheart. Jane the Queen was Jane the Fool—you are Jane the Wise."

While this was passing, Mary had given some instructions in an under tone to Lord Clinton, and he immediately departed to fulfil them. The cavalcade next passed beneath the arch of the Bloody Tower, and the whole retinue drew up on the Green. A wide circle was formed round the queen, amid which, at intervals, might be seen the towering figures of the giants, and next to the elder of them, Xit, who having been obliged to quit his new friend had returned to Og and was standing on his tip-toes to obtain a peep at what was passing. No sooner had Mary taken up her position, than Lord Clinton re-appeared, and brought with him several illustrious persons who, having suffered imprisonment in the fortress for their zeal for the religion of Rome, were now liberated by her command. As the first of the group, a venerable nobleman, approached her and bent the knee before her, Mary's eyes filled with tears, and she exclaimed, in a voice of much emotion—

"Arise, my Lord Duke of Norfolk. The attainder pronounced against you in my father's reign is reversed. Your rank, your dignities, honours, and estates shall be restored to you."

As the duke retired, Gardiner, Bishop of Winchester, advanced.

"Your grace shall not only have your bishopric again," said Mary, "but you shall have another high and important office. I here appoint you Lord Chancellor of the realm."

"Your highness overwhelms me with kindness," replied Gardiner, pressing her hand to his lips.

"You have no more than your desert, my lord," replied Mary. "But I pray you stand aside a moment. There are other claimants of our attention."

Gardiner withdrew, and another deprived bishop took his place. It was Bonner.

"My lord," said Mary, as he bowed before her, "you are restored to the see of London, and the prelate who now so unworthily fills that high post, Bishop Ridley, shall make room for you. My lord," she added to Lord Clinton, "make out a warrant, and let him be committed to the Tower."

"I told you how it would be," observed Renard to Lord Pembroke. "Ridley's last discourse has cost him his liberty. Cranmer will speedily follow."

Other prisoners, amongst whom was Tunstall, Bishop of Durham, and the Duchess of Somerset, now advanced, and were warmly welcomed by the queen. The last person who approached her was a remarkably handsome young man, with fine features and a noble figure. This was Edward Courtenay, son of the Marquess of Exeter, who was beheaded in 1538. Since that time Courtenay had been a close prisoner in the Tower. He was of the blood-royal, being grandson of Catherine, youngest daughter of Edward the Fourth, and his father had been declared heir to the throne.

"You are right welcome, my cousin," said Mary, extending her hand graciously to him, which he pressed to his lips. "Your attainder shall be set aside, and though we cannot restore your father to life, we can repair the fortunes of his son, and restore him to his former honours. Henceforth, you are Earl of Devonshire. Your patent shall be presently made out, and such of your sire's possessions as are in our hands restored."

Courtenay warmly thanked her for her bounty, and the queen smiled upon him in such gracious sort, that a suspicion crossed more than one bosom that she might select him as her consort.

"Her majesty smiles upon Courtenay as if she would bestow her hand upon him in right earnest," observed Pembroke to Renard.

"Hum!" replied the ambassador. "This must be nipped in the bud. I have another husband in view for her."

"Your master, Philip of Spain, I'll be sworn," said Pembroke; "a suitable match, if he were not a Catholic."

Renard made no answer, but he smiled an affirmative.

"I am glad this scheme has reached my ears," observed De Noailles, who overheard the conversation, "it will not suit my master, Henry the Second, that England should form an alliance with Spain. I am for Courtenay, and will thwart Renard's plot."

Having received the whole of the prisoners, Mary gave orders to liberate all those within the Tower who might be confined for their adherence to the Catholic faith.

"My first care," she said, "shall to be celebrate the obsequies of my brother, Edward the Sixth, whose body, while others have been struggling for the throne, remains uninterred according to the forms of the Romish church. The service shall take place in Westminster Abbey."

"That may not be, your highness," said Cranmer, who formed one of the group. "His late majesty was a Protestant prince."

"Beware how you oppose me, my lord," rejoined Mary, sternly. "I have already committed Ridley to prison, and shall not hesitate to commit your grace."

"Your highness will act as it seems best to you," rejoined Cranmer, boldly; "but I shall fulfil my duty, even at the hazard of incurring your displeasure. Your royal brother professed the Protestant faith, which is, as yet—though Heaven only knows how long it may continue so—the established religion of this country, and he must, therefore, be interred according to the rites of that church. No other ceremonies but those of the Protestant church shall be performed within Westminster Abbey, as long as I maintain a shadow of power."

"It is well," replied Mary. "We may find means to make your grace more flexible. To-morrow, we shall publish a decree proclaiming our religious opinions. And it is our sovereign pleasure, that the words 'Papist' and 'Heretic' be no longer used as terms of reproach."

"I have lived long enough," exclaimed the Duke of Norfolk, falling on his knees, "in living to see the religion of my fathers restored."

"The providence which watched over your grace's life, and saved you from the block, when your fate seemed all but sealed, reserved you for this day," rejoined Mary.

"It reserved me to be a faithful and devoted servant of your majesty," replied the duke.

"What is your highness's pleasure touching the Duke of Northumberland, Lord Guilford Dudley, and Lady Jane Dudley?" inquired Clinton.

"The two former will remain closely confined till their arraignment," replied Mary. "Lady Jane, also, will remain a prisoner for the present. And now, my lords, to the palace."

With this she turned her palfrey's head, and passing under the Bloody Tower, proceeded to the principal entrance of the ancient

structure, where she dismounted, and accompanied by a throng of nobles, dames, and attendants, entered the apartments so lately occupied by the unfortunate Jane.

CHAPTER II

HOW JANE WAS IMPRISONED IN THE BRICK TOWER

The first shock over, Jane bore her reverse of fortune with the utmost patience and resignation, uttering no complaints, but making, in the language of Fuller, "misery itself amiable by her pious behaviour." She then reaped the full benefit of the religious education she had received, and her time was wholly passed in meditation, prayer, or profound study. Her demeanour was gentle and calm, graver and more thoughtful than it had been, but by no means cast down. If she had not regained her cheerfulness, she had fully recovered her composure; and the warder, Partridge, in whose habitation she was confined in the first instance, described her "as looking more like a queen than when she sat upon the throne."

In this way some days were spent, when word was brought her by an attendant, that a chamber had been prepared for her in the Brick Tower, and that a guard was without to conduct her to it. She received the intimation with composure, and immediately rose to obey it, requesting only that her books might be sent after her. The attendant, whose eyes were blinded with tears, promised to fulfil her wishes. On going forth, she found an officer and the three gigantic warders waiting to escort her to her prison. The party moved forward in silence, and at a slow pace. While crossing the Green, she perceived another group advancing towards her, and as it drew nearer, she found it was her husband attended by a guard. Uttering a loud cry, she would have rushed and thrown herself into his arms, if she had not been prevented by the officer. Dudley, whose eyes had been bent on the ground, heard the cry, and immediately knew by whom it was uttered. He made a movement similar to that of Jane, but like her he was checked by his attendants. So deeply, however, were the guards on either side moved by the anguish of the unfortunate pair, that, although expressly enjoined to the contrary, they suffered them to approach and embrace each other. The meeting drew tears from all eyes that beheld it; and the susceptible heart of Magog was so touched

that he had much ado to hide his grief. From the few hasty words she was able to exchange with her husband, Jane learnt that his prison had been changed, and that an order had been issued for his removal from the Beauchamp to the Bowyer Tower.

"Every dungeon in the Tower," he said, "is filled with our friends and partisans. Your father, the Duke of Suffolk, is confined in the Martin Tower. And I have been just removed from the Beauchamp Tower to make room for my father, the Duke of Northumberland, my two brothers, Ambrose and Robert, and their faithful followers, Sir John Gates, Sir Henry Gates, and Sir Thomas Palmer."

"Alas!" cried Jane, "we are all equally culpable, and must all suffer alike. But we shall be speedily released."

"On the scaffold," rejoined Dudley, bitterly.

"Ay, on the scaffold," repeated Jane. "And I trust though the remainder of our mortal life may be separated, that we shall meet above to part no more. Pray for this, my dear lord. It is my own constant prayer. And it is my firm reliance upon it that enables me to endure the agony of this meeting, which otherwise would kill me."

"I will strive to do so, Jane," replied her husband. "But I still cling to life and hope."

"Divest yourself of these vain desires, my lord," cried Jane, earnestly, "and turn your thoughts from earth to heaven. There indeed we shall inherit an everlasting kingdom, undisturbed by misery and calamity."

"Madame," said the officer, advancing; "I grieve to abridge this short meeting. But my duty admits of no alternative. You must follow me."

"It is well, sir," she replied. "Farewell, dear Dudley. My prayers shall be for you."

"And mine for you, dear Jane," replied her husband, pressing her to his bosom. "Heaven grant me your patience and resignation!"

"Amen!" she fervently ejaculated. And with another embrace, they parted.

For a short distance the two escorts walked close together, during which the afflicted pair kept their eyes fondly fixed on each other. After passing the north-west corner of the White Tower, Lord Guilford's attendants took a straightforward course, while Jane's guards proceeded to the right. Still but a short distance intervened between them, until Jane beheld her

husband disappear beneath the low-arched entrance of the Bowyer Tower. A convulsive movement passed over her frame; but the next moment she was apparently as calm as ever, and followed the officer into the structure destined for her reception.

This, as has already been intimated, was the Brick Tower, the next turret on the east of the Bowyer Tower. The upper story, which is of brick—whence its name—was erected in the reign of Edward the Fourth, or Richard the Third: the basement story is of stone, and of much greater antiquity.

Entering a narrow passage, she was ushered by the officer into a small room, which he informed her was prepared for her reception. Everything that circumstances would admit appeared to have been done to lessen the rigour of her confinement. The stone walls were hung with arras; and much of the furniture, a carved oak table, and velvet-covered seats, placed in the deep embrasures of the windows, had been brought from Jane's late chamber in the palace.

"This seat," said the officer, pointing to a curiously-carved chair,[1] "was used by Queen Anne Boleyn during her imprisonment. I had it brought hither for your ladyship's accommodation."

"I thank you for your consideration, sir," replied Jane; "it will serve to support one as unhappy as that ill-fated princess."

Having inquired whether she had any further commands with which it was possible for him to comply, and being answered in the negative, the officer took his departure, and Jane was left alone.

Alone! the thought struck chill to her heart. She was now a solitary captive. She heard the door of her prison bolted, she examined its stone walls, partly concealed by the tapestry, she glanced at its iron-barred windows, and her courage forsook her. She had no bosom to lean upon, no ear to which she could impart her sorrows. Her husband, though not far from her, was, like her, a prisoner. She pictured him in his solitary room, and she would have given worlds to be near him, if only for a few moments. The thought occasioned her so much anguish, that she burst into tears, and for some time was a prey to despair. She then knelt down beside the chair, and burying her face in her clasped hands, prayed deeply and fervently for support through her trial. And she prayed not in vain. She soon afterwards arose tranquil and refreshed.

[1] This curious piece of furniture, part of a set of chairs authenticated to have belonged to the unfortunate queen above named, is now in the possession of Mr. Cottingham, the architect, of Waterloo Road.

CHAPTER III

HOW SIMON RENARD ASCENDED TO THE ROOF OF THE WHITE TOWER; AND OF THE GOODLY PROSPECT HE BEHELD THEREFROM

THE night of Queen Mary's entrance into the Tower was spent by Simon Renard, the Duke of Norfolk, Gardiner (the new Lord Chancellor), Courtenay, Arundel, Pembroke, and other noble and honourable persons composing her council, in framing a public declaration of her religious opinions, to be proclaimed on the morrow, and in deliberating on other mighty matters connected with the establishment of her government. Throughout this consultation, when any difference of opinion arose, the matter was invariably deferred to the judgment of the imperial ambassador, whose decision was regarded as final; and as he was looked upon as the chief instrument in crushing the late rebellion, so it was supposed he could, by his sagacity and influence, establish Mary upon her throne.

It was late when the council separated, and instead of returning to his apartments in the palace, Renard, fevered and wearied by the protracted discussion at which he had assisted, preferred refreshing himself by a stroll in the open air. Accordingly, he proceeded to the Green, and began to pace backwards and forwards, at a brisk pace, between the lieutenant's lodgings and the chapel. He continued this exercise for nearly an hour, pondering upon recent events, and revolving future schemes within his plotting brain, when just as day was breaking, and the hoary walls of the White Tower began to reveal themselves in all their grandeur, he perceived a man, armed with a caliver, advancing to meet him. Renard stood still, and throwing his ample cloak over his shoulder, awaited the new comer's approach. It proved to be a warder, who, having seen him as he was going his rounds, at first supposed he had some ill designs in view, but finding out his mistake, as he drew nearer and recognised the Spanish ambassador, with whose person he was familiar, he was about to withdraw, when Renard called him back and demanded his name.

"I am called Gervase Winwike, your excellency," replied the man, "and am one of the senior warders of the Tower."

"Whither are you going, friend?" inquired Renard.

"To the summit of the White Tower," answered Winwike; "to see that the sentinels are at their posts."

"Is it inconsistent with your duty to take me with you?" asked the ambassador.

"By no means," rejoined the warder. "I shall feel honoured by your presence. We shall reach the roof just at sunrise, and the view from thence, on a fine clear morning like the present, is magnificent beyond compare, and will amply repay your excellency for climbing up so many steps as you will have to scale to obtain it."

"Let us make what haste we can, then," said Renard, "I am impatient to behold it."

Thus exhorted, Winwike led the way to the north-west turret of the ancient structure, before a door in which a sentinel was stationed, who, on receiving the pass-word, lowered his halbert, and suffered them to enter. They were now within a small circular chamber, from which a flight of spiral stone steps ascended. Followed by Renard, the warder commenced the ascent. Light was admitted at intervals through loop-holes, gradually diminishing in width as they approached the exterior of the walls, and serving to reveal their immense thickness. As they mounted, Winwike pointed out to his companion the entrance of a passage communicating with the council-chamber. Renard was much struck with the substantial and beautiful masonry of the turret; but being anxious to gain the roof as soon as possible, he urged his companion to quicken his pace, and they soon arrived at an arched door, which Winwike threw open, and they stepped upon the roof.

Springing upon the platform, Renard was about to rush to the battlements, when Winwike offered to lead him to the best point of view. As he followed his conductor towards the south-west angle, Renard cast his eye over the roof. Cannon were placed on the raised platform, while armed men were stationed at twenty paces distant from each other. In the centre of the building stood a tall staff, from which floated the royal banner.

Depositing his caliver against the wall of the turret, Winwike told his companion to look around. Renard obeyed, and a glorious panorama met his gaze. Immediately beneath him lay the fortress, with its chain of towers, its ramparts, its fortifications, its bridges, and its broad deep moat. Beyond was spread out old and picturesque London, with its numerous steeples, above which rose the massive tower of St. Paul's. A little on the left was old London Bridge, covered with out-houses—the noise of the falling water, and the mills, being distinctly audible where they stood. Nearer, lay the river

glittering in the sunbeams, and filled with a forest of masts. Renard contemplated this prospect for some time in silent admiration.

"There you behold the Tower of London," said Winwike, pointing downwards.

"And there I read the history of England," replied Renard.

"If it is written in those towers it is a dark and bloody history," replied the warder, "and yet your excellency says truly. The building on which we stand, and those around us, are the best chronicles of our country. I can recount to your worship their foundation, and the chief events that have happened within them, if you are disposed to listen to me."

"Proceed then," replied Renard, "and when I have heard enough I will interrupt you."

CHAPTER IV

OF THE TOWER OF LONDON; ITS ANTIQUITY AND FOUNDATION; ITS MAGNITUDE AND EXTENT; ITS KEEP, PALACE, GARDENS, FORTIFICATIONS, DUNGEONS, AND CHAPELS; ITS WALLS, BULWARKS, AND MOAT; ITS ROYAL INMATES; ITS CONSTABLES, JAILERS, WARDERS, AND OTHER OFFICERS; ITS PRISONERS, EXECUTIONS, AND SECRET MURDERS

In 1078 (for, instead of following the warder's narrative to Simon Renard, it appears advisable in this place to offer a slight sketch of the renowned fortress under consideration, especially as such a course will allow of its history being brought down to a later period than could otherwise be accomplished), the Tower of London was founded by William the Conqueror, who appointed Gundulph, Bishop of Rochester, principal overseer of the work. By this prelate, who seems to have been a good specimen of the church militant, and who, during the progress of his operations, was lodged in the house of Edmere, a burgess of London, a part of the city wall adjoining the northern banks of the Thames, which had been much injured by the incursions of the tide, was taken down, and a "great square tower," since called the White Tower, erected on its site.

Some writers have assigned an earlier date to this edifice, ascribing its origin to the great Roman invader of our shores, whence it has been sometimes denominated Cæsar's Tower; and the hypothesis is supposed to be confirmed by Fitz Stephens, a

monkish historian of the period of Henry the Second, who states, that "the city of London hath in the east a very great and most strong Palatine Tower, whose turrets and walls do rise from a deep foundation, the mortar thereof being tempered with the blood of beasts." On this authority, Dr. Stukeley has introduced a fort, which he terms the *Arx Palatina*, in his plan of Londinium Augusta. But, though it is not improbable that some Roman military station may have stood on the spot now occupied by the White Tower—certain coins and other antiquities having been found by the workmen in sinking the foundations of the Ordnance Office in 1777—it is certain that no part of the present structure was erected by Julius Cæsar; nor can he, with propriety, be termed the founder of the Tower of London. As to its designation, that amounts to little, since, as has been shrewdly remarked by M. Dulaure, in his description of the Grand Châtelet at Paris, "every old building, the origin of which is buried in obscurity, is attributed to Cæsar or the devil."

Fourteen years afterwards, in the reign of William Rufus, who, according to Henry of Huntingdon, "pilled and shaved the people with tribute, especially about the Tower of London," the White Tower was greatly damaged by a violent storm, which, among other ravages, carried off the roof of Bow Church, and levelled above six hundred habitations with the ground. It was subsequently repaired, and an additional tower built on the south side near the river.

Strengthened by Geoffrey de Magnaville, Earl of Essex, and fourth constable of the fortress, who defended it against the usurper Stephen, but was, nevertheless, eventually compelled to surrender it; repaired in 1155, by Thomas à Becket, then Chancellor to Henry the Second; greatly extended and enlarged in 1190, the second year of the reign of Richard Cœur de Lion, by William Longchamp, Bishop of Ely and Chancellor of the realm, who, encroaching to some distance upon Tower Hill, and breaking down the city wall as far as the first gate called the postern, surrounded it with high embattled walls of stone, and a broad deep ditch, thinking, as Stow observes, "to have environed it with the river Thames"—the Tower of London was finished by Henry the Third, who, in spite of the remonstrances of the citizens, and other supernatural warnings, if credit is to be attached to the statement of Matthew of Paris, completely fortified it.

A gate and bulwark having been erected on the west of the

Tower, we are told by the old chronicler above mentioned, "that they were shaken as it had been with an earthquake and fell down, which the king again commanded to be built in better sort, which was done. And yet, again, in the year 1241, the said wall and bulwarks that were newly builded, whereon the king had bestowed more than twelve thousand marks, were irrecoverably quite thrown down as before; for the which chance the citizens of London were nothing sorry, for they were threatened, that the said wall and bulwarks were builded, to the end, that if any of them would contend for the liberties of the city, they might be imprisoned. And that many might be laid in divers prisons, many lodgings were made, that no one should speak with another." These remarkable accidents (if accidents they were) were attributed by the popular superstition of the times, to the miraculous interference of Thomas à Becket, the guardian saint of the Londoners.

By the same monarch the storehouse was strengthened and repaired, and the keep or citadel whitened (whence probably it derived its name, as it was afterwards styled in Edward the Third's reign "*La Blanche Tour*"), as appears by the following order still preserved in the Tower Rolls:—"We command you to repair the garner within the said tower, and well amend it throughout, wherever needed. And also concerning all the leaden gutters of the Great Tower, from the top of the said tower, through which the rain water must fall down, to lengthen them, and make them come down even to the ground; so that the wall of the said tower, lately whitened anew, may by no means decay, nor easily break out, by reason of the rain water dropping down. But to make upon the said towers *alures* of good and strong timber, and throughout to be well leaded; by which people might see even to the foot of the said tower, and better to go up and down, if need be." Further orders were given in this reign for the beautifying and fitting up the chapels of Saint John and Saint Peter, as already mentioned in the account of those structures.

The same monarch planted a grove, or orchard of "perie trees," as they are described in his mandate to Edward of Westminster, in the vicinity of the Tower, and surrounded it with a wall of mud, afterwards replaced by another of brick, in the reign of Edward the Fourth. He likewise established a menagerie within the fortress, allotting a part of the bulwark at the western entrance, since called the Lions' Tower, for the reception of certain wild beasts, and as a lodging for their keeper.

In 1235, the Emperor Frederick sent him three leopards, in allusion to his scutcheon, on which three of those animals were emblazoned; and from that time, down to a very recent date, a menagerie has been constantly maintained within the Tower. To support it, Edward the Second commanded the sheriffs of London to pay the keeper of his lions sixpence a-day for their food, and three half-pence a-day for the man's own diet, out of the fee farm of the city.

Constant alterations and reparations were made to the ramparts and towers during subsequent reigns. Edward the Fourth encroached still further on Tower Hill than his predecessors, and erected an outer gate called the Bulwark Tower. In the fifth year of the reign of this monarch, a scaffold and gallows having been erected on Tower Hill, the citizens, ever jealous of their privileges and liberties, complained of the step; and to appease them, a proclamation was made to the effect, "that the erection and setting up of the said gallows be not a precedent or example thereby hereafter to be taken, in hurt, prejudice, or derogation of the franchises, liberties, and privileges of the city."

Richard the Third repaired the Tower, and Stow records a commission to Thomas Daniel, directing him to seize for use within this realm, as many masons, bricklayers, and other workmen, as should be thought necessary for the expedition of the king's works within the Tower. In the twenty-third of Henry the Eighth, the whole of the fortress appears to have undergone repair, a survey being taken of its different buildings, which is still preserved in the Chapter-house at Westminster. In the second of Edward the Sixth, the following strange accident occurred, by which one of the fortifications was destroyed. A Frenchman, lodged in the Middle Tower, accidentally set fire to a barrel of gunpowder, which blew up the structure, fortunately without damage to any other than the luckless causer of it.

At the period of this chronicle, as at the present time, the Tower of London comprehended within its walls a superficies of rather more than twelve acres, and without the moat a circumference of three thousand feet and upwards. Consisting of a citadel or keep, surrounded by an inner and outer ward, it was approached on the west by an entrance called the Bulwark Gate, which has long since disappeared. The second entrance was formed by an embattled tower, called the Lion's Gate, conducting to a strong tower flanked with bastions, and defended by a double portcullis, denominated the Middle Tower. The outworks adjoining these towers, in which was kept the menagerie,

were surrounded by a smaller moat, communicating with the main ditch. A large drawbridge then led to another portal, in all respects resembling that last described, forming the principal entrance to the outer ward, and called the By-ward or Gate Tower. The outer ward was defended by a strong line of fortifications; and at the north-east corner stood a large circular bastion, called the Mount.

The inner ward or ballium was defended by thirteen towers, connected by an embattled stone wall about forty feet high and twelve feet thick, on the summit of which was a footway for the guard. Of these towers, three were situated at the west, namely, the Bell, the Beauchamp, and the Devilin Towers; four at the north, the Flint, the Bowyer, the Brick, and the Martin Towers; three at the east, the Constable, the Broad Arrow, and Salt Towers; and three on the south, the Well, the Lanthorn, and the Bloody Tower. The Flint Tower has almost disappeared; the Bowyer Tower only retains its basement story; and the Brick Tower has been so much modernised as to retain little of its pristine character. The Martin Tower is now denominated the Jewel Tower, from the circumstance of its being the depositary of the regalia. The Lanthorn Tower has been swept away with the old palace.

Returning to the outer ward, the principal fortification on the south was a large square structure, flanked at each angle by an embattled tower. This building, denominated Saint Thomas's, or Traitor's Tower, was erected across the moat, and masked a secret entrance from the Thames, through which state prisoners, as has before been related, were brought into the Tower. It still retains much of its original appearance, and recalls forcibly to the mind of the observer the dismal scenes that have occurred beneath its low-browed arches. Further on the seat, in a line with Traitor's Tower, and terminating a wing of the old palace, stood the Cradle Tower. At the eastern angle of the outer ward was a small fortification over-looking the moat, known as the Tower leading to the Iron Gate. Beyond it a drawbridge crossed the moat, and led to the Iron Gate, a small portal protected by a tower, deriving its name from the purpose for which it was erected.

At this point, on the patch of ground intervening between the moat and the river, and forming the platform or wharf, stood a range of mean habitations, occupied by the different artisans and workmen employed in the fortress. At the south of the By-ward Tower, an arched and embattled gateway opened upon

a drawbridge which crossed the moat at this point. Opposite this drawbridge were the main stairs leading to the edge of the river. The whole of the fortress, it is scarcely necessary to repeat, was (and still is) encompassed by a broad deep moat, of much greater width at the sides next to Tower Hill and East Smithfield, than at the south, and supplied with water from the Thames by the sluice beneath Traitor's Gate.

Having now made a general circuit of the fortress, we shall return to the inner ballium, which is approached on the south by a noble gateway, erected in the reign of Edward the Third. A fine specimen of the architecture of the fourteenth century, this portal is vaulted with groined arches adorned with exquisite tracery springing from grotesque heads. At the period of this chronicle, it was defended at each end by a massive gate clamped with iron, and a strong portcullis. The gate and portcullis at the southern extremity still exist, but those at the north have been removed. The structure above it was anciently called the Garden Tower; but subsequently acquired the appellation of the Bloody Tower, from having been the supposed scene of the murder of the youthful princes, sons of Edward the Fourth, by the ruthless Duke of Gloucester, afterwards Richard the Third. Without pausing to debate the truth of this tragical occurrence, it may be sufficient to mention that tradition assigns it to this building.

Proceeding along the ascent leading towards the Green, and mounting a flight of stone steps on the left, we arrive in front of the ancient lodgings allotted to the lieutenant of the Tower. Chiefly constructed of timber, and erected at the beginning of the sixteenth century, this fabric has been so much altered, that it retains little of its original character. In one of the rooms, called, from the circumstance, the Council-chamber, the conspirators concerned in the Gunpowder Plot were interrogated; and in memory of the event, a piece of sculpture, inscribed with their names, and with those of the commissioners by whom they were examined, has been placed against the walls.

Immediately behind the lieutenant's lodgings stands the Bell Tower, a circular structure, surmounted by a small wooden turret containing the alarm-bell of the fortress. Its walls are of great thickness, and light is admitted through narrow loopholes. On the basement floor is a small chamber, with deeply-recessed windows, and a vaulted roof of very curious construction. This tower served as a place of imprisonment to John Fisher, the martyred Bishop of Rochester, beheaded on Tower Hill for

denying Henry the Eighth's supremacy; and to the Princess Elizabeth, who was confined within it by her sister, Queen Mary.

Traversing the Green, some hundred and forty feet brings us to the Beauchamp, or Cobham Tower, connected with the Bell Tower by means of a footway on the top of the ballium wall. Erected in the reign of Henry the Third, as were most of the smaller towers of the fortress, this structure appears, from the numerous inscriptions, coats of arms, and devices that crowd its walls, to have been the principal state-prison. Every room, from roof to vault, is covered with melancholy memorials of its illustrious and unfortunate occupants.

Over the fire-place in the principal chamber (now used as a mess-room by the officers of the garrison), is the autograph of Philip Howard, Earl of Arundel, beheaded in 1572, for aspiring to the hand of Mary Queen of Scots. On the right of the fire-place, at the entrance of a recess, are these words: "DOLOR PATIENTIA VINCITUR. G. GYFFORD. AUGUST 8, 1586." Amongst others, for we can only give a few as a specimen of the rest, is the following enigmatical inscription. It is preceded by the date 1568, April 23, but is unaccompanied by any signature.

No hope is hard or vayne
That happ doth ous attayne.

The next we shall select is dated 1581, and signed Thomas Myagh.

THOMAS MIAGH WHICH LIETHE HERE ALONE
THAT FAYNE WOLD FROM HENCE BEGON
BY TORTURE STRAUNGE MI TROVTH WAS TRYED
YET OF MY LIBERTIE DENIED.

Of this unfortunate person the following interesting account is given by Mr. Jardine, in his valuable treatise on the *Use of Torture in the Criminal Law of England*. "Thomas Myagh was an Irishman who was brought over by the command of the Lord Deputy of Ireland, to be examined respecting a treasonable correspondence with the rebels in arms in that country. The first warrant for the torture of this man was probably under the sign-manual, as there is no entry of it in the council register. The two reports made by the Lieutenant of the Tower and Dr. Hammond, respecting their execution of this warrant, are, however, to be seen at the State-Paper Office. The first of these, which is dated the 10th of March, 1580-1, states that they had

twice examined Myagh, but had forborne to put him in Skevington's irons, because they had been charged to examine him with secrecy, 'which they could not do, that manner of dealing requiring the presence and aid of one of the jailers all the time that he should be in those irons,' and also because they 'found the man so resolute, as in their opinions little would be wrung out of him but by some sharper torture.' The second report, which is dated the 17th of March, 1580, merely states that they had again examined Myagh, and could get nothing from him, 'notwithstanding that they had made trial of him by the torture of Skevington's irons, and with so much sharpness, as was in their judgment for the man and his cause convenient.' How often Myagh was tortured does not appear; but Skevington's irons seem to have been too mild a torture, for on the 30th of July, 1581, there is an entry in the council books of an authority to the Lieutenant of the Tower and Thomas Norton, to deal with him with the rack in such sort as they should see cause."

From many sentences expressive of the resignation of the sufferers, we take the following, subscribed A. POOLE, 1564:— "*Deo . servire . penitentiam . inire . fato . obedire . regnare . est.*" Several inscriptions are left by this person, one four years later than the foregoing, is as follows: "*A passage perillus maketh a port pleasant.*" Here is another sad memento: "O MISER HVON, CHE PENSI OD ESSERO." Another: "REPRENS LE: SAGE: ET: IL: TE: AIMERA: J. S. 1538." A third: "*Principium sapientiæ timor Domini.* I. H. S. X. P. S. *Be friend to one. Be ennemye to none. Anno D.* 1571, 10 *Sept. The most unhappy man in the world is he that is not patient in adversities: For men are not killed with the adversities they have, but with the impatience they suffer. Tout vient apoient, quy peult attendre. Gli sospiri ne son testimoni veri dell' angoscia mia. Æt.* 29. *Charles Bailly.*"

Most of these records breathe resignation. But the individual who carved the following record, and whose name has passed away, appears to have numbered every moment of his captivity: "*Close prisoner* 8 *months*, 32 *wekes*, 224 *dayes*, 5376 *houres.*" How much of anguish is comprised in this brief sentence!

We could swell out this list, if necessary, to a volume, but the above may suffice to show their general character. Let those who would know how much their forefathers have endured cast their eyes over the inscriptions in the Beauchamp Tower. In general they are beautifully carved, ample time being allowed the writers for their melancholy employment. It has been

asserted that Anne Boleyn was confined in the uppermost room of the Beauchamp Tower. But if an inscription may be trusted, she was imprisoned in the Martin Tower (now the Jewel Tower) at that time a prison lodging.

Postponing the description of the remaining towers until we have occasion to speak of them in detail, we shall merely note, in passing, the two strong towers situated at the south-western extremity of the White Tower, called the Coal Harbour Gate, over which there was a prison denominated the Nun's Bower, and proceed to the palace, of which, unluckily for the lovers of antiquity, not a vestige now remains.

Erected at different periods, and consisting of a vast range of halls, galleries, courts, and gardens, the old palace occupied, in part, the site of the modern Ordnance Office. Commencing at the Coal Harbour Gate, it extended in a south-easterly direction to the Lanthorn Tower, and from thence branched off in a magnificent pile of building, called the Queen's Gallery, to the Salt Tower. In front of this gallery, defended by the Cradle Tower and the Well Tower, was the privy garden. Behind it stretched a large quadrangular area, terminated at the western angle by the Wardrobe Tower, and at the eastern angle by the Broad Arrow Tower. It was enclosed on the left by a further range of buildings, termed the Queen's Lodgings, and on the right by the inner ballium wall. The last-mentioned buildings were also connected with the White Tower, and with a small embattled structure flanked by a circular tower, denominated the Jewel House where the regalia were then kept. In front of the Jewel House stood a large decayed hall, forming part of the palace; opposite which was a court, planted with trees, and protected by the ballium wall.

This ancient palace, the scene of so many remarkable historical events—the residence, during certain portions of their reigns, of all our sovereigns, from William Rufus down to Charles the Second—is now utterly gone. Where is the glorious hall which Henry the Third painted with the story of Antiochus, and which it required thirty fir-trees to repair, in which Edward the Third and all his court were feasted by the captive John, in which Richard the Second resigned his crown to Henry of Lancaster, in which Henry the Eighth received all his wives before their espousals, in which so many royal councils and royal revels have been held—where is that great hall? Where, also, is the chamber in which Queen Isabella, consort of Edward the Second, gave birth to the child called, from the circumstance, Joan of

the Tower? They have vanished, and other structures occupy their place. Demolished in the reign of James the Second, an ordnance office was erected on its site; and this building being destroyed by fire in 1788, it was succeeded by the present edifice bearing the name.

Having now surveyed the south of the fortress, we shall return to the north. Immediately behind Saint Peter's Chapel stood the habitations of the officers of the then ordnance department, and next to them an extensive range of storehouses, armouries, granaries, and other magazines, reaching to the Martin Tower. On the site of these buildings was erected, in the reign of William the Third, that frightful structure, which we trust the better taste of this, or some future age will remove—the Grand Storehouse. Nothing can be imagined more monstrous or incongruous than this ugly Dutch toy (for it is little better), placed side by side with a stern old Norman donjon, fraught with a thousand historical associations and recollections. It is the great blot upon the Tower. And much as the destruction of the old palace is to be lamented, the erection of such a building as this, in such a place, is infinitely more to be deplored. We trust to see it rased to the ground.

In front of the Constable Tower stood another range of buildings appropriated to the different officers and workmen connected with the Mint, which, until the removal of the place of coinage to its present situation on Little Tower Hill, it is almost needless to say, was held within the walls of the fortress.

The White Tower once more claims our attention. Already described as having walls of enormous thickness, this venerable stronghold is divided into four stories including the vaults. The latter consist of two large chambers and a smaller one, with a coved termination at the east, and a deeply-recessed arch at the opposite extremity. Light is admitted to this gloomy chamber by four semicircular-headed loopholes. At the north is a cell ten feet long by eight wide formed in the thickness of the wall, and receiving no light except from the doorway. Here tradition affirms that Sir Walter Raleigh was confined, and composed his History of the World.

Amongst other half-obliterated inscriptions carved on the arched doorway of this dungeon, are these: HE THAT INDVRETH TO THE ENDE SHALL BE SAVID. M. IO. R. RVDSTON. DAR. KENT. AN°. 1553.—BE FEITHFUL VNTO THE DETH AND I WIL GIVE THE A CROWN OF LIFE. T. FANE. 1554. Above stands Saint John's Chapel, and the upper story is occupied by the council-chamber

and the rooms adjoining. A narrow vaulted gallery, formed in the thickness of the wall, communicating with the turret stairs, and pierced with semicircular-headed openings for the admission of light to the interior, surrounds this story. The roof is covered with lead, and crowned with four lofty turrets, three angular and one square, surmounted with leaden cupolas, each terminated with a vane and crown.

We have spoken elsewhere, and shall have to speak again of the secret and subterranean passages, as well as of the dungeons of the Tower; those horrible and noisome receptacles, deprived of light and air, infested by legions of rats, and flooded with water, into which the wretched captives were thrust to perish by famine, or by more expeditious means; and those dreadful contrivances, the Little Ease, and the Pit; the latter a dark and gloomy excavation sunk to the depth of twenty feet.

To the foregoing hasty sketch, in which we have endeavoured to make the reader acquainted with the general outline of the fortress, we would willingly, did space permit, append a history of the principal occurrences that have happened within its walls. We would tell how in 1234, Griffith, Prince of Wales, in attempting to escape from the White Tower, by a line made of hangings, sheets, and table-cloths, tied together, being a stout heavy man, broke the rope, and falling from a great height, perished miserably—his head and neck being driven into his breast between the shoulders. How Edward the Third first established a Mint within the Tower, coining florences of gold. How in the reign of the same monarch, three sovereigns were prisoners there, namely, John, King of France, his son Philip, and David, King of Scotland. How in the fourth years of the reign of Richard the Second, during the rebellion of Wat Tyler, the insurgents having possessed themselves of the fortress, though it was guarded by six hundred valiant persons, expert in arms, and the like number of archers, conducted themselves with extraordinary licence, bursting into the king's chamber, and that of his mother, to both of whom they offered divers outrages and indignities; and finally dragged forth Simon Sudbury, Archbishop of Canterbury, and hurrying him to Tower Hill, hewed off his head at eight strokes, and fixed it on a pole on London Bridge, where it was shortly afterwards replaced by that of Wat Tyler.

How, in 1458, jousts were held on the Tower Green by the Duke of Somerset and five others, before Queen Margaret of Anjou. How in 1471, Henry the Sixth, at that time a prisoner,

was said to be murdered within the Tower; how seven years later, George Duke of Clarence, was drowned in a butt of Malmsey in the Bowyer Tower; and how five years after that, the youthful Edward the Fifth, and the infant Duke of York, were also *said*, for the tradition is more than doubtful, to be smothered in the Bloody Tower. How in 1483, by command of the Duke of Gloucester, who had sworn he would not dine till he had seen his head off, Lord Hastings was brought forth to the green before the chapel, and after a short shrift, "for a longer could not be suffered, the protector made so much haste to dinner, which he might not go to until this were done, for saving of his oath," his head was laid down upon a large log of timber, and stricken off.

How in 1512, the woodwork and decorations of Saint John's Chapel in the White Tower were burnt. How in the reign of Henry the Eighth, the prisons were constantly filled, and the scaffold deluged with blood. How Sir Richard Empson and Edmund Dudley, the father of John Dudley, Duke of Northumberland, were beheaded. How the like fate attended the Duke of Buckingham, destroyed by Wolsey, the martyred John Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, the wise and witty Sir Thomas More, Anne Boleyn, her brother Lord Rochford, Norris, Smeaton, and others; the Marquis of Exeter, Lord Montacute, and Sir Edward Neville; Thomas, Lord Cromwell, the counsellor of the dissolution of the monasteries; the venerable and courageous Countess of Salisbury; Lord Leonard Grey; Katherine Howard and Lady Rochford; and Henry, Earl of Surrey.

How, in the reign of Edward the Sixth, his two uncles, Thomas Seymour, Baron Sudley, and Edward Seymour, Duke of Somerset, were brought to the block; the latter, as has been before related, by the machinations of Northumberland.

Passing over, for obvious reasons, the reign of Mary, and proceeding to that of Elizabeth, we might relate how Thomas Howard, Duke of Norfolk, was beheaded; how the dungeons were crowded with recusants and seminary priests; amongst others, by the famous Jesuits, Fathers Campion and Persons; how Lord Stourton, whose case seems to have resembled the more recent one of Lord Ferrers, was executed for the murder of the Hartgills; how Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland, shot himself in his chamber, declaring that the jade Elizabeth should not have his estate; and how the long catalogue was closed by the death of the Earl of Essex.

How, in the reign of James the First, Sir Walter Raïeigh

was beheaded, and Sir Thomas Overbury poisoned. How in that of Charles the First, Thomas Wentworth, Earl of Strafford, and Archbishop Laud, underwent a similar fate. How in 1656, Miles Sunderland, having been condemned for high treason, poisoned himself; notwithstanding which, his body, stripped of all apparel, was dragged at the horse's tail to Tower Hill, where a hole had been digged under the scaffold, into which it was thrust, and a stake driven through it. How, in 1661, Lord Monson and Sir Henry Mildmay suffered, and in the year following Sir Henry Vane. How in the same reign Blood attempted to steal the crown; and how Algernon Percy and Lord William Russell were executed.

How, under James the Second, the rash and unfortunate Duke of Monmouth perished. How, after the rebellion of 1715, Lords Derwentwater and Kenmure were decapitated; and after that of 1745, Lords Kilmarnock, Balmerino, and Lovat. How in 1760, Lord Ferrers was committed to the Tower for the murder of his steward, and expiated his offence at Tyburn. How Wilkes was imprisoned there for a libel in 1762; and Lord George Gordon for instigating the riots of 1780. How, to come to our own times, Sir Francis Burdett was conveyed thither in April 1810; and how, to close the list, the Cato Street conspirators, Thistlewood, Ings, and others, were confined there in 1820.

The chief officer appointed to the custody of the royal fortress, is termed the Constable of the Tower; a place, in the words of Stow, of "high honour and reputation, as well as of great trust, many earls and one duke having been constable of the Tower." Without enumerating all those who have filled this important post, it may be sufficient to state, that the first constable was Geoffrey de Mandeville, appointed by William the Conqueror; the last, Arthur, Duke of Wellington. Next in command is the lieutenant, after whom come the deputy-lieutenant, and major, or resident governor. The civil establishment consists of a chaplain, gentleman-porter, physician, surgeon, and apothecary; gentleman-jailer, yeoman porter, and forty yeomen warders. In addition to these, though in no may connected with the government or custody of the Tower, there are the various officers belonging to the ordnance department; the keepers of the records, the keeper of the regalia; and formerly there were the different officers of the Mint.

The lions of the Tower—once its chief attraction with the many—have disappeared. Since the establishment of the Zoological Gardens, curiosity having been drawn in that direc-

tion, the dens of the old menagerie are deserted, and the sullen echoes of the fortress are no longer awakened by savage yells and howling. With another and more important attraction—the armouries—it is not our province to meddle.

To return to Simon Renard and the warder. Having concluded his recital, to which the other listened with profound attention, seldom interrupting him with a remark, Winwike proposed, if his companion's curiosity was satisfied, to descend.

"You have given me food for much reflection," observed Renard, aroused from a reverie into which he had fallen; "but before we return I would gladly walk round the buildings. I had no distinct idea of the Tower till I came hither."

The warder complied, and led the way round the battlements, pausing occasionally to point out some object of interest.

Viewed from the summit of the White Tower, especially on the west, the fortress still offers a striking picture. In the middle of the sixteenth century, when its outer ramparts were strongly fortified, when the gleam of corslet and pike was reflected upon the dark waters of its moat, when the inner ballium walls were entire and unbroken, and its thirteen towers reared their embattled fronts, when within each of those towers state prisoners were immured, when its drawbridges were constantly raised, and its gates closed, when its palace still lodged a sovereign, when councils were held within its chambers, when its secret dungeons were crowded, when Tower Hill boasted a scaffold, and its soil was dyed with the richest and best blood of the land, when it numbered among its inferior officers, jailers, torturers, and an executioner, when all its terrible machinery was in readiness, and could be called into play at a moment's notice, when the steps of Traitor's Gate were worn by the feet of those who ascended them, when, on whichever side the gazer looked, the same stern prospect was presented—the palace, the fortress, the prison—a triple conjunction of fearful significance, when each structure had dark secrets to conceal, when beneath all these ramparts, towers, and bulwarks, were subterranean passages and dungeons—*then*, indeed, it presented a striking picture both to the eye and mind.

Slowly following his companion, Renard counted all the towers, which, including that whereon he was standing, and those connected with the bulwarks and palace, amounted to twenty-two, marked their position, commented upon the palace, and the arrangement of its offices and outbuildings, examined its courts and gardens, inquired into the situation of

the queen's apartments, and was shown a long line of buildings with a pointed roof, extending from the south-east angle of the keep to the Lanthorn Tower, admired the magnificent prospect of the heights of Surrey and Kent, traced the broad stream of the Thames as far as Greenwich, suffered his gaze to wander over the marshy tract of country towards Essex, noted the postern gate in the ancient city walls, standing at the edge of the north bank of the moat, traced those walls by their lofty entrances from Aldgate to Cripplegate, and from thence returned to the church of All Hallows Barking, and Tower Hill. The last object upon which his gaze rested was the scaffold. A sinister smile played upon his features as he gazed on it.

"There," he observed, "is the bloody sceptre by which England is ruled. From the palace to the prison is a step—from the prison to the scaffold another."

"King Henry the Eighth gave it plenty of employment," observed Winwike.

"True," replied Renard; "and his daughter, Queen Mary, will not suffer it to remain idle."

"Many a head will, doubtless, fall (and justly), in consequence of the late usurpation," remarked the warder.

"The first to do so now rests within that building," rejoined Renard, glancing at the Beauchamp Tower.

"Your worship, of course, means the Duke of Northumberland, since his grace is confined there," returned the warder.

"Well, if she is spared who, though placed foremost in the wrongful and ill-advised struggle, was the last to counsel it, I care not what becomes of the rest. Poor Lady Jane! Could our eyes pierce yon stone walls," he added, pointing to the Brick Tower, "I make no doubt we should discover her on her knees. She passes most of her time, I am informed, in prayer."

"Humph!" ejaculated Renard. And he half muttered, "She shall either embrace the Romish faith, or die by the hand of the executioner."

Winwike made no answer to the observation, and affected not to hear it, but he shuddered at the look that accompanied it—a look that brought to mind all he heard of the mysterious and terrible individual at his side.

By this time, the sun was high in heaven, and the whole fortress astir. A flourish of trumpets was blown on the Green, and a band of minstrels issued from the portal of the Coal Harbour Tower. The esquires, retainers, pages, and servitors of the various noblemen, lodged within the palace, were hurrying

to and fro, some hastening to their morning meal, others to different occupations. Everything seemed bright and cheerful. The light laugh and the merry jest reached the ear of the listeners. Rich silks and costly stuffs, mixed with garbs of various-coloured serge, with jerkins and caps of steel, caught the eye. Yet how much misery was there near this smiling picture! What sighs from those in captivity responded to the shouts and laughter without! Queen Mary arose and proceeded to matins in Saint John's Chapel. Jane awoke and addressed herself to solitary prayer; while Northumberland, who had passed a sleepless night, pacing his dungeon like a caged tiger, threw himself on his couch, and endeavoured to shut out the light of day and his own agonising reflections.

Meanwhile, Renard and the warder had descended from the White Tower and proceeded to the Green.

"Who is that person beneath the Beauchamp Tower gazing so inquisitively at its barred windows?" demanded the former.

"It is the crow scenting the carrion—it is Mauger the headsman," answered Winwike.

"Indeed?" replied Renard; "I would speak with him."

CHAPTER V

HOW THE DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND WAS ARRAIGNED OF HIGH TREASON IN WESTMINSTER HALL; AND HOW HE MADE FOUR REQUESTS AFTER THE JUDGMENT

Closely confined within the Beauchamp Tower, and treated with great rigour, it was almost a satisfaction to the Duke of Northumberland to be informed, after nearly a fortnight's imprisonment, that his trial would take place on the 18th of August. Though he anticipated the result, and had no hope of escaping the block, the near approach of death did not cast him down, but on the contrary served to reassure his firmness, which of late, shaken by his altered state of health, and intense mental anxiety, had in some degree failed him. The last few weeks had wonderfully changed his appearance. Heretofore, though past the middle term of life, he exhibited no symptom of decay. His frame was strong and muscular, his deportment lofty and majestic, his eye piercing as the eagle's. He was now shrunken, bent, with the gait and look of an old man. On the intelligence above mentioned being communicated to him, he all at once

shook off this feebleness. His eye regained its fire, his frame its strength and lofty bearing; and if his figure was wasted and his brow furrowed, it detracted nothing from his dignity. Aware that his enemies would sit in judgment upon him, he determined to confront them boldly.

When the day appointed for the arraignment arrived, the duke prepared himself betimes. He was habited in a doublet of black velvet, and wore the collar of the order of the garter. His eldest son, John Dudley, Earl of Warwick, and the Marquess of Northampton, were to be tried with him, and on the morning in question the three noblemen met for the first time since their imprisonment. The meeting took place in a spacious chamber on the first floor, now used, as has been already observed, as a mess-room, but then as a hall in which the prisoners were separately introduced at stated intervals to take exercise.

Throwing his arms round his son's neck, and with difficulty repressing his emotion, the duke implored his forgiveness.

"For what, my lord?" demanded the young nobleman.

"For the great wrong I have done you in placing you in this fearful jeopardy," answered Northumberland.

"You have done me no wrong, my lord," replied his son. "My wishes were as strongly in favour of the cause as yours, and I am therefore as culpable as yourself. And as I should have been the first to congratulate you on its success, so I ought to be the last to reproach you with its failure."

"Nevertheless the fault *is* mine, and mine only," replied the duke. "I was the originator of the scheme—the planner of the snare into which we have fallen—and if you perish, your death will lie at my door."

"Think not of me, father," replied the young man. "The life I received from you, I will gladly lay down for you. If you desire my forgiveness you shall have it. But I ought rather to ask yours. And, at all events, I entreat your blessing."

"Heaven bless you, my son, and have mercy on us both," exclaimed Northumberland, fervently. "If the humblest supplication could move our judges in your favour it should not be wanting. But I well know they are inexorable."

"I would rather die a thousand deaths than you so demeaned yourself," replied Warwick. "Ask nothing from them but a speedy judgment. We go to a condemnation, not a trial."

"True, my lord," added Northampton. "We have nothing to hope, and therefore nothing to fear. The game is lost, and we must pay the penalty."

"Right, my lord," rejoined Northumberland, embracing him, "and we will discharge it to the uttermost. Would that my life could pay for all."

"Since it cannot be, my lord," replied Northampton, "e'en let us meet our fate like men, and give our enemies no additional triumph. To see your grace so well reconciled to your fate, must encourage those who have lost so little in comparison."

"I am so well reconciled to it," replied the duke, "that I scarcely desire to be restored to my former condition. And yet," he added, sternly, "I would gladly enjoy my former power for an hour, to be avenged on one man."

"His name?" inquired the Earl of Warwick, quickly.

"Simon Renard," replied the duke.

A deep silence ensued, which was broken at length by Northumberland, who inquired from the officer in attendance if he knew aught of the queen's intentions towards Lady Jane Dudley.

"Her highness, it is said, is inclined to pardon her, in consideration of her youth," replied the officer, "but her councillors are averse to such leniency."

"They are my enemies," rejoined the duke. "Again my crimes are visited on an innocent head."

At this moment, a small arched door near one of the recesses was opened, and a warder announced that the escort was ready to convey the prisoners to Westminster Hall.

Preceded by the officer, the duke and his companions descended a short spiral stone staircase, and, passing under an arched doorway, on either side of which was drawn up a line of halberdiers, entered upon the Green. The whole of this spacious area, from Saint Peter's Chapel to the Lieutenant's lodgings—from the walls of the tower they had quitted, to those of the White Tower, was filled with spectators. Every individual in the fortress, whose duty did not compel his attendance elsewhere, had hastened thither to see the great Duke of Northumberland proceed to his trial; and so intense was the curiosity of the crowd, that it was with great difficulty that the halberdiers could keep them from pressing upon him. On the duke's appearance something like a groan was uttered, but it was instantly checked. Northumberland was fully equal to this trying moment. Aware of his own unpopularity, aware that amid that vast concourse he had not one well-wisher, but that all rejoiced in his downfall, he manifested no discomposure, but marched with a step so majestic, and glanced around with

a look so commanding, that those who were near him involuntarily shrunk before his regards. The deportment of Northampton was dignified and composed—that of the Earl of Warwick fierce and scornful. Lord Clinton, the Constable of the Tower, and the Lieutenant, Sir John Gage, now advanced to meet them, and the former inquired from Northumberland whether he had any request to make that could be complied with. Before an answer could be returned by the duke, an old woman broke through the ranks of the guard, and regardless of the menaces with which she was assailed confronted him.

"Do you know me?" she cried.

"I do," replied the duke, a shudder passing over his frame. "You are Gunnora Braose."

"I am," she answered. "I am, moreover, foster-mother to the Duke of Somerset—the great, the good Lord Protector, whom you, murderer and traitor, destroyed eighteen months ago. By your false practices, he was imprisoned in the tower you have just quitted; he was led forth as you are, but he was not received like you with groans and hootings, but with tears. He was taken to Westminster Hall where you sat in judgment upon him, and condemned him, and where he will this day testify against you. Tremble! perfidious duke, for a fearful retribution is at hand. He, whom you have destroyed, sleeps in yon chapel. Ere many days have passed, you will sleep beside him."

"Peace! woman," cried Lord Clinton, interfering.

"I *will* speak," continued Gunnora, "were they the last words I had to utter. Behold!" she cried, waving a handkerchief before the duke, "this cloth was dipped in thy victim's blood. It is now beginning to avenge itself upon thee. Thou goest to judgment—to death—to death—ha! ha!"

"Remove her!" cried Lord Clinton.

"To judgment!—to judgment!—to death!" reiterated the old woman with a wild exulting laugh, as she was dragged away.

Order being restored, the procession set forth. First, marched a band of halberdiers; then came a company of arquebusiers, armed with calivers. Immediately before the duke walked the gentleman-jailer, who, according to a custom then observed towards those charged with high treason, carried the axe with the edge turned *from* the prisoner. On either side of Northumberland and his companions walked an officer of the guard, with a drawn sword in his hand. The rear of the cortège was brought up by two other bands of halberdiers and arquebusiers.

Taking its course across the Green, and passing beneath the gloomy portal of the Bloody Tower, the train entered an archway at the left of the By-ward Tower, and crossing the drawbridge, drew up at the head of the stairs leading to the river. Here several boats were in readiness to convey them to their destination. As soon as the duke and his companions had embarked, the gentleman-jailer followed them, and stationed himself at the head of the boat, holding the gleaming instrument of death in the same position as before.

In this way, surrounded by the escort, and attended by a multitude of smaller vessels, filled with curious spectators, the prisoners were conveyed to Westminster. No sympathy was exhibited for the duke's fallen state; but, on the contrary, the spectacle seemed to afford more satisfaction to the observers than the gorgeous pageant he had so recently devised for their entertainment. Northumberland was not insensible to this manifestation of dislike, though he made no remark upon it; but he could not avoid noticing, with a sensation of dread, one boat following in his wake, as near as the escort would permit, in which was seated an old woman, waving a bloodstained handkerchief, and invoking vengeance upon his head. Many of the wherries pressed round her to ascertain the cause of her vociferations, and as soon as it was understood who she was, other voices were added to hers. On landing at the stairs near Westminster Hall, the escort first disembarked, and then the duke and his companions, who, preceded by the gentleman-jailer in the same order as before, were conducted to the place of trial. In the midst of this magnificent and unrivalled hall, which William Rufus, who built it, affirmed was "but a bed-chamber in comparison of what he meant to make," was erected an immense scaffold, hung with black cloth. At the upper extremity was a canopy of state, embroidered with the royal escutcheon in gold; and on either side were twenty-seven seats, each emblazoned with armorial bearings woven in silver. The canopy was reserved for the Duke of Norfolk, Lord High Steward of England; the chairs for the different peers appointed to hear the arraignment of the prisoners. At the lower extremity was the bar. On entering the hall, the duke and his companions were conducted into a small chamber on the right, where they were detained till the arrival of the judges.

After some time, they were summoned by an usher, and following the attendant through two long files of halberdiers, the duke slowly but firmly ascended the steps of the scaffold.

On arriving at the bar, he bowed profoundly to the assemblage, and every peer, except the Duke of Norfolk, immediately arose, and acknowledged the salutation. Drawing himself up to his full height, Northumberland then glanced sternly around the tribunal. Not one of those upon whom his gaze fell but—scarcely a month ago—had trembled at his nod. Wherever he looked, his glance encountered an enemy. There sat Arundel, Pembroke, Shrewsbury, Rich, Huntingdon, Darcy—the abettors in his treason, now his judges. On the right of the Lord High Steward sat Bishop Gardiner, in his capacity of Lord Chancellor: on the left, Lord Paget.

Northumberland's indictment having been read, he thus addressed the court—

"My lords," he said, "I here profess my faith and obedience to the queen's highness, whom I confess to have most grievously offended, and beyond the hope of pardon. I shall not attempt to say anything in my own defence. But I would willingly have the opinion of the court in two points."

"State them," said the Duke of Norfolk.

"First then," replied Northumberland, "I desire to know, whether the performance of an act by the authority of the sovereign and the council, and by warrant of the great seal of England, can be construed as treason?"

"Most undoubtedly, in your grace's case," replied the Duke of Norfolk; "inasmuch as the great seal whence your authority was derived was not the seal of the lawful queen of the realm, but that of a usurper, and therefore no warrant."

Northumberland bowed.

"I am answered," he said. "And now to the second point on which I would be resolved. Is it fitting or right," he continued, glancing fiercely around, "that those persons who are equally culpable with myself, and by whose letters and commandments I have been directed in all I have done, should be my judges, or pass upon my trial at my death?"

"Grant that others are as deeply implicated in this case as your grace," replied the Duke of Norfolk; "yet so long as no attainder is of record against them, they are able in the law to pass upon any trial, and cannot be challenged, except at the queen's pleasure."

"I understand," replied Northumberland, bowing coldly; "and since it is useless to urge any reasonable matter, I will at once confess the indictment, entreating your grace to be a means of mercy for me unto the queen."

Judgment was then pronounced.

The duke once more addressed them.

"I beseech you, my lords," he said, "all to be humble suitors for me to the queen's highness, that she grant me four requests."

Most of the peers having signified their assent by a slight inclination of the head, he proceeded—

"First, that I may have that death which noblemen have had in times past, and not the other. Secondly," and his voice faltered, "that her highness will be gracious to my children, who may hereafter do her good service, considering that they went by my commandment, who am their father, and not of their own free wills."

"Do not include me in your solicitation, my lord," interrupted the Earl of Warwick, haughtily. "I neither ask mercy, nor would accept it at the queen's hands; and prefer death to her service. What I have done, I have done on no authority save my own, and were it to do again, I would act in like manner."

"Rash boy, you destroy yourself," cried the duke.

"Proceed, my lord," observed the Duke of Norfolk, compassionately; "your son's indiscreet speech will not weigh with us."

"Thirdly, then," rejoined Northumberland, "I would entreat that I may have appointed to me some learned man for the instruction and quieting of my conscience. And fourthly, that her highness will send two of the council to commune with me, to whom I will declare such matters as shall be expedient for her and the state. And thus I beseech you all to pray for me."

"Doubt it not, my lord," rejoined Norfolk; "and doubt not, also, that your requests shall be duly represented to the queen."

"Add, if it please your grace," pursued Northumberland, "a few words in favour of the unhappy Lady Jane Dudley, who, as is well known to many now sitting in judgment upon me, so far from aspiring to the crown, was by enticement and force compelled to accept it."

The duke then retired, and the Marquess of Northampton having advanced to the bar, and pleaded to his indictment, sentence was passed on him likewise.

His example was followed by the Earl of Warwick, who heard his condemnation pronounced with a smile.

"I thank you, my lords," he said, when the sentence was uttered, "and crave only this favour of the queen, that as the goods of those condemned to death are totally confiscated, her highness will be pleased to let my debts be paid."

Upon this, he bowed to the tribunal and withdrew.

During the trial, an immense concourse had assembled in the open space in front of the hall, waiting in breathless impatience for the result. It was not till towards evening that this was known. The great doors were then thrown open, and a troop of halberdiers came forth to clear the way for the prisoners. A deep dead silence prevailed, and every eye was bent upon the doorway. From beneath it marched the gentleman-jailer, carrying the axe with its edge *towards* the prisoners. This was enough. The mob knew they were condemned, and expressed their satisfaction by a sullen roar.

Suddenly, the voice of a woman was heard exclaiming, "See ye not the axe? See ye not the edge turned towards him? He is condemned. The slayer of the good Duke of Somerset is condemned. Shout! Shout!"

And in obedience to her commands, a loud cry was raised by the mob. Amid this clamour and rejoicing, Northumberland and his companions were conveyed to their boat, and so to the Tower.

CHAPTER VI

BY WHAT MEANS THE DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND WAS RECONCILED TO THE CHURCH OF ROME

Several days having elapsed since the trial, and no order made for his execution, the Duke of Northumberland, being of a sanguine temperament, began to indulge hopes of mercy. With hope, the love of life returned, and so forcibly, that he felt disposed to submit to any humiliation to purchase his safety. During this time, he was frequently visited by Bishop Gardiner, who used every persuasion to induce him to embrace the Romish faith. Northumberland, however, was inflexible on this point, but, professing the most sincere penitence, he besought the bishop, in his turn, to intercede with the queen in his behalf. Gardiner readily promised compliance, in case his desires were acceded to; but as the duke still continued firm in his refusal, he declined all interference. "Thus much I will promise," said Gardiner, in conclusion; "your grace shall have ample time for reflection, and if you place yourself under the protection of the Catholic church, no efforts shall be wanting on my part to move the queen's compassion towards you."

That night, the officer on guard suddenly threw open the door of his cell, and admitting an old woman, closed it upon them. The duke, who was reading at the time by the light of a small lamp set upon a table, raised his eyes and beheld Gunnora Braose.

"Why have you come hither?" he demanded. "But I need not ask. You have come to gratify your vengeance with a sight of my misery. Now you are satisfied, depart."

"I am come partly with that intent, and partly with another," replied Gunnora. "Strange as it may sound, and doubtful, I am come to save you."

"To save me!" exclaimed Northumberland, starting. "How? But—no!—no! This is mockery. Begone, accursed woman."

"It is no mockery," rejoined Gunnora. "Listen to me, Duke of Northumberland. I love vengeance well, but I love my religion better. Your machinations brought my foster-son, the Duke of Somerset, to the block, and I would willingly see you conducted thither. But there is one consideration that overcomes this feeling. It is the welfare of the Catholic church. If you become a convert to that creed, thousands will follow your example; and for this great good I would sacrifice my own private animosity. I am come hither to tell you your life will be spared, provided you abandon the Protestant faith, and publicly embrace that of Rome."

"How know you this?" demanded the duke.

"No matter," replied Gunnora. "I am in the confidence of those who, though relentless enemies of yours, are yet warmer friends to the Church of Rome."

"You mean Simon Renard and Gardiner?" observed Northumberland.

Gunnora nodded assent.

"And now my mission is ended," she said. "Your grace will do well to weigh what I have said. But your decision must be speedy, or the warrant for your execution will be signed. Once within the pale of the Catholic church, you are safe."

"If I should be induced to embrace the offer?" said the duke.

"If"—cried Gunnora, her eye suddenly kindling with vindictive fire.

"Woman," rejoined the duke, "I distrust you. I will die in the faith I have lived."

"Be it so," she replied. "I have discharged the only weight I had upon my conscience, and can now indulge my revenge

freely. Farewell! my lord. Our next meeting will be on Tower Hill."

"Hold!" cried Northumberland. "It may be as you represent, though my mind misgives me."

"It is but forswearing yourself," observed Gunnora, sarcastically. "Life is cheaply purchased at such a price."

"Wretch!" cried the duke. "And yet I have no alternative. I accede."

"Sign this then," returned Gunnora, "and it shall be instantly conveyed to her highness."

Northumberland took the paper, and casting his eye hastily over it, found it was a petition to the queen, praying that he might be allowed to recant his religious opinions publicly, and become reconciled to the Church of Rome.

"It is in the hand of Simon Renard," he observed.

"It is," replied Gunnora.

"But who will assure me if I do this, my life will be spared?"

"*I* will," answered the old woman.

"You!" cried the duke.

"I pledge myself to it," replied Gunnora. "Your life would be spared, even if your head were upon the block. I swear to you by this cross," she added, raising the crucifix that hung at her neck, "if I have played you falsely, I will not survive you."

"Enough," replied the duke, signing the paper.

"This shall to the queen at once," said Gunnora, snatching it with a look of ill-disguised triumph. "To-morrow will be a proud day for our church."

And with this she quitted the cell.

The next morning, the duke was visited by Gardiner, on whose appearance he flung himself on his knees. The bishop immediately raised him, and embraced him, expressing his delight to find that he at last saw through his errors. It was then arranged that the ceremonial of the reconciliation should take place at midnight in Saint John's Chapel in the White Tower. When the duke's conversion was made known to the other prisoners, the Marquess of Northampton, Sir Andrew Dudley (Northumberland's brother), Sir Henry Gates, and Sir Thomas Palmer; they all—with the exception of the Earl of Warwick, who strongly and indignantly reprobated his father's conduct—desired to be included in the ceremonial. The proposal being readily agreed to, priests were sent to each of them, and the remainder of the day was spent in preparation for the coming rites.

At midnight, as had been arranged, they were summoned.

Preceded by two priests, one of whom bore a silver cross, and the other a large flaming wax candle, and escorted by a band of halberdiers, carrying lighted torches, the converts proceeded singly, at a slow pace, across the Green, in the direction of the White Tower. Behind them marched the three gigantic warders, Og, Gog, and Magog, each provided with a torch. It was a solemn and impressive spectacle, and as the light fell upon the assemblage collected to view it, and upon the hoary walls of the keep, the effect was peculiarly striking. Northumberland walked with his arms folded, and his head upon his breast, and looked neither to the right nor to the left.

Passing through Coal Harbour Gate, the train entered an arched doorway in a structure then standing at the south-west of the White Tower. Traversing a long winding passage, they ascended a broad flight of steps, at the head of which was a gallery leading to the western entrance of the chapel. Here, before the closed door of the sacred structure, beneath the arched and vaulted roof, surrounded by priests and deacons in rich copes, one of whom carried the crosier, while others bore silver-headed staves, attired in his amice, stole, pluvial, and alb, and wearing his mitre, sat Gardiner upon a faldstool. Advancing slowly towards him, the duke fell upon his knees, and his example was imitated by the others. Gardiner then proceeded to interrogate them in a series of questions appointed by the Romish formula for the reconciliation of a heretic; and the profession of faith having been duly made, he arose, took off his mitre, and delivering it to the nearest priest, and extended his arms over the converts, and pronounced the absolution. With his right thumb he then drew the sign of the cross on the duke's forehead, saying, "*Accipe signum crucis*," and being answered, "*Accepi*," he went through the same form with the rest. Once more assuming the mitre, with his left hand he took the duke's right, and raised him, saying, "*Ingredere in ecclesiam Dei à quâ incaute aberrasti. Horresce idola. Respue omnes pravitates et superstitiones hereticas. Cole Deum omnipotentem et Jesum filium ejus, et Spiritum Sanctum.*"

Upon this, the doors of the chapel were thrown open, and the bishop led the chief proselyte towards the altar. Against the massive pillars at the east end of the chapel, reaching from their capitals to the base, was hung a thick curtain of purple velvet, edged with a deep border of gold. Relieved against this curtain stood the altar, covered with a richly-ornamented antipendium, sustaining a large silver crucifix, and six massive candlesticks of

the same metal. At a few paces from it, on either side, were two other colossal silver candlesticks, containing enormous wax lights. On either side were grouped priests with censers, from which were diffused the most fragrant odours.

As Northumberland slowly accompanied the bishop along the nave, he saw, with some misgiving, the figures of Simon Renard and Gunnora emerge from behind the pillars of the northern aisle. His glance met that of Renard, and there was something in the look of the Spaniard that made him fear he was the dupe of a plot—but it was now too late to retreat. When within a few paces of the altar, the duke again knelt down, while the bishop removed his mitre as before, and placed himself in front of him. Meanwhile, the whole nave of the church, the aisles, and the circular openings of the galleries above, were filled with spectators. A wide semicircle was formed around the converts. On the right stood several priests. On the left Simon Renard had planted himself, and near to him stood Gunnora; while, on the same side against one of the pillars, was reared the gigantic frame of Magog. A significant look passed between them as Northumberland knelt before the altar. Extending his arms over the convert, Gardiner now pronounced the following exhortation:—"*Omnipotens sempiterne Deus hanc ovem tuam de faucibus lupi tuâ virtute subtractam paternâ recipe pietate et gregi tuo reforma piâ benignitate ne de familiâ tuâ damno inimicus exultet; sed de conversione et liberatione ejus ecclesiam ut pia mater de filio reperto gratuletur per Christum Dominum nostrum.*"

"Amen!" ejaculated Northumberland.

After uttering another prayer, the bishop resumed his mitre, and seating himself upon the faldstool, which, in the interim, had been placed by the attendants in front of the altar, again interrogated the proselyte:—

"*Homo, abrenuncias Sathanas et angelos ejus?*"

"*Abrenuncio,*" replied the duke.

"*Abrenuncias etiam omnes sectas hereticæ pravitatis?*" continued the bishop.

"*Abrenuncio,*" responded the convert.

"*Vis esse et vivere in unitate sanctæ fidei Catholicæ?*" demanded Gardiner.

"*Volo,*" answered the duke.

Then again taking off his mitre, the bishop arose, and laying his right hand upon the head of the duke, recited another prayer, concluding by signing him with the cross. This done, he resumed his mitre, and seated himself on the faldstool, while

Northumberland, in a loud voice, again made a profession of his faith, and abjuration of his errors—admitting and embracing the apostolical ecclesiastical traditions, and all others—acknowledging all the observances of the Roman Church—purgatory, the veneration of saints and relics, the power of indulgences, promising obedience to the Bishop of Rome, and engaging to retain and confess the same faith entire and inviolated to the end of his life. "*Ago talis*," he said, in conclusion, "*cognoscens veram Catholicam et Apostolicam fidem. Anathematizo hic publicè omnem heresem, præcipuè illam de quâ hactenus extiti.*" This he affirmed by placing both hands upon the book of the holy gospels, proffered him by the bishop, exclaiming, "*Sic me Deus adjuvet, et hæc sancta Dei evangelia!*"

The ceremony was ended, and the proselyte arose. At this moment, he met the glance of Renard—that triumphant and diabolical glance, its expression was not to be mistaken. Northumberland shuddered. He felt that he had been betrayed.

CHAPTER VII

HOW THE DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND WAS BEHEADED ON TOWER HILL

THREE days after Northumberland's reconciliation with the Church of Rome, the warrant for his execution was signed by Queen Mary. The fatal intelligence was brought him by the lieutenant, Sir John Gage, and though he received it with apparent calmness, his heart sank within him. He simply inquired when it was to take place, and, being informed on the following day at an early hour, he desired to be left alone. As soon as the lieutenant was gone, he abandoned himself wholly to despair, and fell into a state bordering on distraction. While he was in this frenzied state, the door of his cell opened, and the jailer introduced Gunnora Braose and a tall man muffled in the folds of an ample black cloak.

"Wretch!" cried the duke, regarding the old woman fiercely. "You have deceived me. But the device shall avail you little. From the scaffold I will expose the snare in which I have been taken. I will proclaim my Protestant opinions; and my dying declaration will be of more profit to that faith than my recent recantation can be to yours."

"Your grace is mistaken," rejoined Gunnora. "I do not

deserve your reproaches, as I will presently show. I am the bearer of a pardon to you."

"A pardon!" exclaimed Northumberland, incredulously.

"Ay, a pardon," replied the old woman. "The queen's highness will spare your life. But it is her pleasure that her clemency be as public as your crime. You will be reprieved on the scaffold."

"Were I assured of this," cried Northumberland, eagerly grasping at the straw held out to him, "I would exhort the whole multitude to embrace the Catholic faith."

"Rest satisfied of it, then," replied Gunnora. "May I perish at the same moment as yourself if I speak not the truth!"

"Whom have we here?" inquired the duke, turning to the muffled personage. "The headsman?"

"Your enemy," replied the individual, throwing aside his mantle, and disclosing the features of Simon Renard.

"It is but a poor revenge to insult a fallen foe," observed Northumberland, disdainfully.

"Revenge is sweet, however obtained," rejoined Renard. "I am not come, however, to insult your grace, but to confirm the truth of this old woman's statement. Opposed as I am to you, and shall ever be, I would not have you forfeit your life by a new and vile apostacy. Adjure the Catholic faith, and you will die unpitied by all. Maintain it; and at the last moment, when the arm of the executioner is raised and the axe gleams in the air—when the eyes of thousands are fixed on it—sovereign mercy will arrest the blow."

"You awaken new hope in my bosom," rejoined the duke.

"Be true to the faith you have embraced, and fear nothing," continued Renard. "You may yet be restored to favour, and a new career of ambition will open to you."

"Life is all I ask," replied the duke; "and if that be spared, it shall be spent in her majesty's service. My pride is thoroughly humbled. But the language you hold to me, M. Renard, is not that of an enemy. Let me think that our differences are ended."

"They will be ended to-morrow," replied Renard, coldly.

"Be it so," replied Northumberland. "The first act of the life I receive from her highness shall be to prostrate myself at her feet: the next, to offer my thanks to you, and entreat your friendship."

"Tush," returned Renard, impatiently. "My friendship is more to be feared than my enmity."

"If there is any means of repairing the wrong I have done

you," said the duke, turning to Gunnora, "be assured I will do it."

"I am content with what your grace has done already," rejoined Gunnora, sternly. "You cannot restore the Duke of Somerset to life. You cannot give back the blood shed on the scaffold—"

"But I can atone for it," interrupted the duke.

"Ay," cried Gunnora, her eyes flashing with vindictive fire, "you *can*—fearfully atone for it."

"Ha!" exclaimed the duke.

"Your grace will not heed her raving," remarked Renard, seeing that Northumberland's suspicions were aroused by the old woman's manner.

"You can atone for it," continued Gunnora, aware of the impression she had produced, and eager to remove it, "by a life of penance. Pass the night in prayer for the repose of his soul, and do not omit to implore pardon for yourself, and to-morrow I will freely forgive you."

"I will do as you desire," replied the duke.

"I must now bid your grace farewell," said Renard. "We shall meet to-morrow—on the scaffold."

"But not part there, I hope," replied Northumberland, forcing a smile.

"That will rest with your grace—not me," replied Renard, in a freezing tone.

"Will you accept this from me?" said Northumberland, detaching a jewelled ornament from his dress, and offering it to Gunnora.

"I will accept nothing from you," replied the old woman. "Yes—one thing," she added quickly.

"It is yours," rejoined the duke. "Name it?"

"You shall give it me to-morrow," she answered evasively.

"It is his head you require," observed Renard, with a sinister smile, as they quitted the Beauchamp Tower.

"You have guessed rightly," rejoined the old woman, savagely.

"We have him in our toils," returned Renard. "He cannot escape. You ought to be content with your vengeance, Gunnora. You have destroyed both body and soul."

"I *am* content," she answered.

"And now to Mauger," said Renard, "to give him the necessary instructions. You should bargain with him for Northumberland's head, since you are so anxious to possess it."

"I shall not live to receive it," rejoined Gunnora.

"Not live!" he exclaimed. "What mean you?"

"No matter," she replied. "We lose time. I am anxious to finish this business. I have much to do to-night."

Taking their way across the Green, and hastening down the declivity they soon arrived at the Bloody Tower. Here they learnt from a warder that Mauger, since Queen Mary's accession, had taken up his quarters in the Cradle Tower, and thither they repaired. Traversing the outer ward in the direction of the Lanthorn Tower, they passed through a wide portal and entered the Privy Gardens, on the right of which stood the tower in question.

As they drew near, they heard the shrill sound produced by the sharpening of some steel instrument. Smiling significantly at Gunnora, Renard instead of opening the door proceeded to a narrow loop-hole, and looked in. He beheld a savage-looking individual seated on a bench near a grindstone. He had an axe in one hand, which he had just been sharpening, and was trying its edge with his thumb. His fierce blood-shot eyes, peering from beneath his bent and bushy brows, were fixed upon the weapon. His dress consisted of a doublet of red serge with tight black sleeves, and hose of the same colour. His brow was lowering and wrinkled, the summit of his head perfectly bald, but the sides were garnished with long black locks, which together with his immense grizzled moustaches, bristling like the whiskers of a cat-a-mountain, and ragged beard, imparted a wild and forbidding look to his physiognomy. Near him rested a square, solid piece of wood, hollowed out on either side to admit the shoulder and head of the person laid upon it. This was the block. Had Renard not known whom he beheld, instinct would have told him it was the headsman.

Apparently satisfied with the sharpness of the implement, Mauger was about to lay it aside, when the door opened, and Renard and Gunnora entered the chamber. The executioner rose to receive them. He had received a wound in his left leg which had crippled the limb, and he got up with difficulty.

"Do not disturb yourself," said Renard. "My business will be despatched in a few seconds. You are preparing I see for the execution to-morrow. What I have to say relates to it. The moment the duke's head is laid upon this block," he added, pointing to it, "strike. Give him not a moment's pause. Do you hear?"

"I do," replied Mauger. "But I must have some warrant?"

"Be this your warrant," replied Renard, flinging him a heavy

purse. "If you require further authority, you shall have it under the queen's own hand."

"I require nothing further, worshipful sir," replied Mauger, smiling grimly. "Ere the neck has rested one second upon the block, the head shall be off."

"I have also a boon to offer, and an injunction to give," said Gunnora taking off the ring given her by the unfortunate Lady Jane, and presenting it to him.

"Your gift is the richer of the two, or I am mistaken, good mistress," said Mauger, regarding the glittering gem with greedy eyes. "What am I to do for it? I cannot behead him twice."

"I shall stand in front of the scaffold to-morrow," replied Gunnora, "in some conspicuous place where you will easily discern me. Before you deal the fatal blow, make a sign to me—thus—do you understand?"

"Perfectly," replied the headsman. "I will not fail you."

Upon this, Renard and the old woman quitted the Cradle Tower, and walked together as far as the outer ward, where each took a separate course.

The last night of his existence was passed by the Duke of Northumberland in a most miserable manner. Alternately buoyed up by hope, and depressed by fear, he could neither calm his agitation, nor decide upon any line of conduct. Allowed, as a matter of indulgence, to remain within the large room, he occupied himself in putting the finishing touches to a carving on the wall, which he had commenced on this first imprisonment, and had wrought at at intervals. This curious sculpture may still be seen on the right hand of the fire-place of the mess-room in the Beauchamp Tower, and contains his cognisance, a bear and lion supporting a ragged staff surrounded by a border of roses, acorns, and flowers intermingled with foliage.

Northumberland was employed upon the third line of the quatrain below his name, which remains unfinished to the present day, when he was interrupted by the entrance of a priest, sent to him by Gardiner. The holy man found him in no very favourable frame of mind, but succeeded after some time in awakening him to a due sense of his awful situation. The duke then made a full confession of his guilt, and received his shrift. At daybreak, the priest departed, with a promise to attend him to the place of execution.

Much tranquillised, the duke now prepared himself for his last trial. He pondered over what he should say on the scaffold, and nerved himself to meet his fate, whatever it might be. The

Duke of Warwick was then introduced to him to receive his blessing, and to take an everlasting farewell. After he had received the duke's embrace, the earl observed, "Would I could change places with you, father. I would say that on the scaffold which would shake the bigot Mary on the throne."

The duke then partook of some refreshment, and wrapped himself in a loose robe of grain-coloured damask. At eight o'clock, the sheriffs of London arrived at the Bulwark Gate, and demanded the body of the prisoner. Upon this, the lieutenant, accompanied by four warders, proceeded to the Beauchamp Tower, and informed the duke that all was in readiness.

"I am ready, too," replied Northumberland, once more embracing his son, whose firmness did not desert him at this trying juncture. And he followed the lieutenant to the Green. Here they found the priest, and a band of halberdiers waiting to escort him to the scaffold. Among the bystanders stood Simon Renard, who immediately advanced towards him.

"How fares your grace?" he asked.

"Well enough, sir, I thank you," answered the duke, bowing. "I shall be better anon."

The train then set forward, passing through lines of spectators, until it reached the Middle Tower, where it halted, to allow the lieutenant to deliver the prisoner to the sheriffs and their officers. This ceremony over, it again set forward, and passed through the Bulwark Gate.

Prepared as the duke was for some extraordinary sight, he was yet taken completely by surprise. The whole area of Tower Hill seemed literally paved with human heads. A line of scaffoldings was erected on the brink of the moat, and every seat in them was occupied. Never before had so vast an assemblage been collected in the same place. The whole of the western ramparts of the fortress—the roof and battlements of the White Tower—every point from which a view of the spectacle could be obtained, was thronged. On the duke's appearance, a murmur of satisfaction pervaded the immense host, and he then felt that even if the queen's pardon should arrive, his personal safety was more than questionable.

Preceded by a band of arquebusiers, armed with calivers, and attended by the sheriffs, the priest, and Simon Renard, Northumberland marched slowly forward. At length, he reached the scaffold. It was surrounded by seats, set aside for persons of distinction; and among its occupants were many of his former

friends and allies. Avoiding their gaze, the duke mounted the scaffold with a firm foot; but the sight of the vast concourse from this elevated point almost unmanned him. As he looked around, another murmur arose, and the mob undulated like the ocean. Near the block stood Mauger, leaning on his axe; his features concealed by a hideous black mask. On the duke's appearance, he fell on his knees, and, according to custom, demanded forgiveness, which was granted. Throwing aside his robe, the duke then advanced to the side of the scaffold, and leaning over the eastern rail, thus addressed the assemblage:

"Good people. I am come hither this day to die, as ye know. Indeed, I confess to you all that I have been an evil liver, and have done wickedly all the days of my life; and, of all, most against the queen's highness, of whom I here openly ask forgiveness," and he reverentially bent the knee. "But I alone am not the original doer thereof, I assure you, for there were some others who procured the same. But I will not name them, for I will now hurt no man. And the chief occasion that I have erred from the Catholic faith and true doctrine of Christ, has been through false and seditious preachers. The doctrine, I mean, which has continued through all Christendom since Christ. For, good people, there is, and hath been ever since Christ, one Catholic church; which church hath continued from him to his disciples in one unity and concord, and so hath always continued from time to time until this day, and yet doth throughout all Christendom, ourselves alone excepted. Of this church I openly profess myself to be one, and do steadfastly believe therein. I speak unfeignedly from the bottom of my heart. And I beseech you all bear witness that I die therein. Moreover, I do think, if I had had this belief sooner, I never should have come to this pass: wherefore I exhort you all, good people, take example of me, and forsake this new doctrine betimes. Defer it not long, lest God plague you as he hath me, who now suffer this vile death most deservedly."

Concluding by desiring the prayers of the assemblage, he returned slowly, and fixing an inquiring look upon Renard, who was standing with his arms folded upon his breast, near the block, said in a low tone, "It comes not."

"It is not yet time," replied Renard.

The duke was about to kneel down, when he perceived a stir amid the mob in front of the scaffold, occasioned by some one waving a handkerchief to him. Thinking it was the signal of a pardon, he paused. But he was speedily undeceived. A second

glance showed him that the handkerchief was waved by Gunnora, and was spotted with blood.

Casting one glance of the bitterest anguish at Renard, he then prostrated himself, and the executioner at the same moment raised his hand. As soon as the duke had disposed himself upon the block, the axe flashed like a gleam of lightning in the sunshine—descended—and the head was severed from the trunk.

Seizing it with his left hand, Mauger held it aloft, almost before the eyes were closed, crying out to the assemblage, in a loud voice, "Behold the head of a traitor!"

Amid the murmur produced by the released respiration of the multitude, a loud shriek was heard, and a cry followed that an old woman had suddenly expired. The report was true. It was Gunnora Braose.

CHAPTER VIII

OF QUEEN MARY'S ATTACHMENT TO COURTENAY

Mary still continued to hold her court within the Tower. Various reasons were assigned for this choice of residence; but her real motive was that her plans for the restoration of the Catholic religion could be more securely concerted within the walls of the fortress than elsewhere. Simon Renard, who had become her confidential adviser, and through whom she carried on an active correspondence with her cousin, the Emperor Charles the Fifth, could here visit her unobserved. Here, also, she secretly received the envoy of Pope Julius the Third, Francisco Commendone (afterwards the celebrated cardinal of that name), and detained him until after the Duke of Northumberland's execution, that he might convey intelligence of the event, and of the effect produced by it upon the populace, to the pontiff. To Commendone she gave the strongest assurances of her attachment to the Church of Rome, and of her fixed determination to restore its worship. But at the same time she declared that the change must be gradual, and that any undue precipitation would be fatal. In this opinion both Gardiner and Renard, who were admitted to the conference, concurred. And satisfied with their representations, the envoy departed, overjoyed at the success of his mission.

Other and gentler thoughts, however, than those connected with her government, occupied the bosom of the queen. We

have already spoken of the impression produced upon her at their first interview on the Tower Green, by the striking figure and noble features of Edward Courtenay, whom she on that occasion created Earl of Devonshire, and of the speculations it gave rise to among the bystanders. The interest she then felt had been subsequently strengthened. And it appeared certain to all who had any means of observation, that if she selected a husband, her choice would fall upon Courtenay.

The progress of her attachment was jealously watched by Renard, who having other designs in view, secretly opposed it. But aware that Mary, like many of her sex, was possessed of a spirit, which would be apt, if thwarted, to run into the opposite extreme, he was obliged to proceed with the utmost caution. He had, moreover, a strong party against him. From the moment it became evident that the queen regarded the Earl of Devonshire with the eyes of affection, all were eager to pay court to him. Among his warmest supporters were Gardiner and De Noailles; the latter being mainly influenced in his conduct by distrust of the Court of Spain. Renard, therefore, stood alone. But though everything appeared against him, he did not despair of success. Placing reliance upon Mary's jealous and suspicious character, he felt certain of accomplishing his purpose. Accordingly, he affected to approve her choice; and with the view of carrying out his scheme more effectually, took care to ingratiate himself with Courtenay.

Inexperienced as the latter was in the arts of a court, being then only twenty-one, and having passed fourteen years of his life in close captivity in the Tower, he was easily duped by the wily ambassador; and though repeatedly warned against him by De Noailles, who saw through Renard's design, he disregarded the caution. Satisfied of the queen's favourable disposition towards him, which was evinced by the most marked attention on her part, this young nobleman conceived himself wholly beyond the reach of rivalry; and trusting to his personal advantages, and the hold he had obtained over the affections of his royal mistress, he gave himself little concern about an opposition which he regarded as futile. He looked upon himself as certain of the queen's hand; and but for his own imprudence, he would have been actually possessed of it.

Mary's meditated alliance was agreeable to all parties, except, as just intimated, that of Spain. Already nearly related to the crown by his descent from Edward the Fourth, no objection could be raised against her favourite on the score of rank;

while his frank and conciliating manner, combined with his rare endowments of mind and person, won him universal regard. Doctor Thomas Wilson, in the funeral oration pronounced over Courtenay at Padua in 1556, states that, during his long imprisonment in the Tower, "he wholly devoted himself to study, and that neither the *angustia loci, nec solitudo, nec amissio libertatis, illum à literis avocarent;* that he made such progress in philosophy, that no nobleman was equal to him in it; that he also explored the *mysteria naturæ;* that he entered into the *mathematicorum labyrintha;* that he was so fond of painting, that he could easily and laudably make any one's portrait on a *tabula;* that he was equally attached to music, and had attained in it *absolutam perfectionem;* and that to these acquisitions he added the Spanish, French, and Italian languages. In manners he was grave without pride; pleasant without levity; prudent in speech; cautious in answering; modest in disputing; never boasting of himself, nor excluding others; and though familiar with many, yet intimately known to few." Allowing for the drawbacks which must necessarily be made from such an *éloge*, enough will remain to prove that his accomplishments were of no common order.

On the onset of his career, however, Courtenay was assailed by temptations which it required more experience of the world to resist. Strictly confined from his earliest youth, it may be conceived that when first exposed to female fascination, his heart was speedily melted. Hitherto, he had only read of beauty. He now felt its full force, and placed no bounds to the admiration which the charms of the dames of honour excited within his breast. It was upon this point of his character that Renard justly grounded his hopes of alienating the queen's affections. Encouraging his new-born licentiousness, he took care that none of his gallantries should fail to reach the ears of his royal mistress. Though of a staid and severe character, Mary was not indisposed to make allowances for one so utterly inexperienced as Courtenay; and her first direction to Renard was to check him. So far from doing this, the artful ambassador incited him to further irregularities, and contrived to place new objects in his way. In vain De Noailles remonstrated, entreating him at least to be more guarded in his conduct. In vain Gardiner sternly rebuked him. He turned a deaf ear alike to remonstrance and reproof; and hurried on by the unbridled impetuosity of youth, passed from one excess to another. Renard witnessed his conduct with secret satisfaction; but he was not prepared for the calmness

with which the queen viewed it. She was greatly displeased, yet as her lover still seemed passionately devoted to her, she looked upon his conduct as resulting from the circumstances of his previous life, and trusting he would soon open his eyes to its folly, was content to pardon it.

Renard then saw that he must have recourse to stronger measures. As Mary's jealousy was not to be easily aroused, he resolved to bring a more formidable rival into the field. There was one ready made to his hand. It was the Princess Elizabeth. On no one point was the queen's vanity more easily touched than by any reference to the superior charms of her sister. Any compliment paid the latter she construed into a slight to herself; and she watched with an uneasy glance the effect produced by her in public. So sensible was Elizabeth of the queen's foible, that she kept in the background as much as possible. Unaware of the mortification he inflicted upon his royal mistress, and of the injury he did himself, Courtenay often praised the princess's beauty in terms so rapturous as to call a blush into her cheek, while the blood was driven from that of Mary. So undisguised was his admiration, that the queen resolved to remove the object of it from her court; and would have done so, but for the artful management of Renard, who felt that such a step would ruin his plans.

Long before Courtenay had noticed it, the subtle ambassador, well skilled in woman's feelings, ascertained the state of Elizabeth's heart, and saw that she was not proof against the captivating manners and personal graces of the handsome young nobleman. It was not difficult for one possessed of so many opportunities as himself to heighten this feeling into a passion; and before long he had the satisfaction to find that the princess was deeply enamoured of her sister's suitor. Nor was Courtenay less easily enthralled. Apprised of his conquest by Renard, instead of resisting it, he at once surrendered himself to the snare. Again De Noailles, who saw his dangerous position, came to his aid. Again Gardiner rebuked him more severely than before. He derided their remonstrances; and heedless of the changing manner of the queen—heedless also of the peril to which he exposed the princess, he scarcely attempted to disguise his passion, or to maintain the semblance of love for his royal mistress. Consumed by jealousy, Mary meditated some blow which should satisfy her outraged feelings; while Renard only waited a favourable opportunity to bring matters to a crisis.

Affairs being in this state, it chanced one day that Courtenay

received a summons to the queen's presence, and instantly repairing thither, he found her alone. His reception was so cold, that he was at no loss to understand she was deeply offended; and he would have thrown himself at her feet, if she had not prevented him by impatiently waving her hand.

"I have sent for you, my lord," she said, "for the last time—"

"For the last time, my gracious mistress!" exclaimed Courtenay.

"Do not interrupt me," rejoined Mary, severely. "I have sent for you to tell you that whatever were the feelings I once entertained for you, they are now entirely changed. I will not remind you of the favours I have shown you—of the honours I have bestowed on you—or of the greater honours I intended you. I will simply tell you that your ingratitude equals your perfidy; and that I banish you henceforth from my presence."

"How have I offended your highness?" demanded Courtenay, panic-stricken.

"*How?*" cried Mary, fiercely, her eyes kindling, and her countenance assuming the terrible expression she inherited from her father. "Do you affect ignorance of the cause? I have overlooked your indiscretions, though I have not been ignorant of them, imputing them to youth and inexperience. I have overlooked them, I say, because I thought I discovered amid all this vice and folly the elements of a noble nature—and because," and her voice faltered, "I persuaded myself that you loved me."

"Have you no faith in my adjurations of attachment?" cried Courtenay, prostrating himself, and endeavouring to take her hand.

"None," rejoined the queen, withdrawing her hand; "none whatever. Arise, my lord, and do not further degrade yourself. You may love the queen, but you do not love the woman. You may prize my throne, but you do not prize me."

"You wrong me, gracious madam. On my soul you do," rejoined Courtenay. "I may have trifled with others, but I have given my heart wholly to you."

"It is false!" cried Mary, furiously. "You love the princess, my sister."

Courtenay turned very pale. But he instantly recovered himself.

"Your highness is mistaken," he answered.

"What!" cried the queen, her anger increasing each moment. "Dare you persist in the denial of your falsehood? Dare you

tell me to my face that you have not breathed words of passion to her? Dare you assert that you have not lamented your engagement to me? Dare you say this?"

"I dare, madam."

"Then your own words shall give you the lie, traitor," replied the queen. "Here is your letter to her," she added, producing a paper, "wherein you tell her so."

"Confusion!" uttered Courtenay, "Renard has betrayed me."

"Is this letter your writing?" demanded the queen.

"I will not prevaricate, madam," replied Courtenay; "it is."

"And in the face of this you declare you have not deceived me?"

"I *have* deceived you, gracious madam," replied Courtenay. "But I have never ceased to love you."

"My lord!—my lord!" exclaimed Mary, in a menacing tone. "Beware how you attempt to deceive me further, or as God shall judge me, you shall find that the daughter of Henry the Eighth is not to be offended with impunity."

"I know you are terrible in anger, gracious madam," replied Courtenay; "but you are also just. Judge me, condemn me, if you please, but hear me. He who gave you that letter, Simon Renard, counselled me to write it."

"Ha!" exclaimed the queen.

"I have been guilty of folly—madness—" rejoined Courtenay, "but not the black perfidy your highness imagines. Dismiss me from your presence, send me into exile—I deserve any punishment—but do not believe that I have ceased to love you."

"I know not what *you* term love, my lord," replied Mary; "but I have no idea of sharing the affection of any man with another. Grant, however, that you speak the truth, why have you addressed this passionate epistle to the Princess Elizabeth?"

"I have already said I was deceived," replied Courtenay. "I cannot excuse my conduct, though I lament it."

"Are you sincere?" said Mary, who began to be softened by her lover's apparent penitence.

"By what oath shall I confirm my truth?" he replied, fervently.

"I will test it more surely," rejoined the queen, as if struck by a sudden idea.

"In any way your highness thinks proper," returned Courtenay.

"Summon the Princess Elizabeth to our presence instantly,"

said Mary, striking a small bell, the sound of which brought an usher before her.

"The Princess Elizabeth!" exclaimed Courtenay.

"Ay, the princess," repeated the queen. "I will confront you with her. Bid the lord chancellor and the ambassadors of Spain and France attend us," she continued to the usher.

"I know not what your highness intends," said Courtenay, as the attendant departed. "But I will die rather than do aught to prejudice the princess."

"I doubt it not, my lord," rejoined Mary, bitterly. "But though I cannot punish the perfidy of a lover, I can the disobedience of a subject. If you refuse to obey my commands, you will take the consequences."

Courtenay bit his lips to repress the answer that rose to them.

In a few minutes the usher returned and announced the Princess Elizabeth, as well as Gardiner, Renard, and De Noailles. Instantly perceiving how matters stood, the imperial ambassador deemed his own triumph complete, and Courtenay's disgrace certain.

"My lord," said Mary, addressing Gardiner, "it is no secret to you, neither to you, M. Renard, nor to you, M. De Noailles, that of all those proposed to me in marriage—the Princes of Spain and Portugal, the King of the Romans, Cardinal Pole, and others—I have preferred this man, whom I myself have raised to the rank he now holds, and enriched with the estates he enjoys."

"We know it, gracious madam," replied Gardiner, alarmed at the ominous commencement, "and we think your highness has made a happy choice, and one most acceptable to your subjects. Do we not, M. Renard?"

The ambassador bowed, but said nothing.

"The alliance is in all respects agreeable to my sovereign, Henry the Second of France," observed De Noailles.

"What then if I inform you," pursued Mary, "that the Earl of Devonshire has rejected my proposal? What if he has broken his oath of fidelity? What if he has cast aside the crown offered him, and smitten by the charms of a youthful beauty, abandoned the queen, who has stooped to raise him to her throne!"

"Impossible!" exclaimed Gardiner and De Noailles.

"You are mistaken," rejoined Mary, sternly. "You shall hear him avow his perfidy with his own lips."

"When I *do* hear it," replied De Noailles, looking steadily at

Courtenay, "I will believe it. But I cannot think him capable of such madness."

"Nor I," said Gardiner, glancing significantly from beneath his bent brows.

Elizabeth, who on the commencement of the queen's address had turned very pale, could with difficulty maintain her composure. Her agitation did not escape the notice of Mary, whose jealousy was increased by the sight.

"What if I tell you," she continued, "that this false earl has transferred his affections to our sister?"

"Your highness!" exclaimed Elizabeth.

"Peace!" cried the queen, fiercely. "And she, well knowing his engagement to ourself, has dared to encourage his suit."

"Whoever told you majesty this, lied in his throat," cried Courtenay. "I own myself guilty, but the Princess Elizabeth is no partner to my folly."

"You do well to shield her, my lord," retorted Mary. "But you cannot deceive me. She is equally culpable."

"Nay, more so, if it comes to this," interposed Elizabeth, whose spirit, which was quite equal to her sister's, was aroused. "If I had repressed my admiration for the Earl of Devonshire, he would have made no advances to me. I am the most to blame in this matter."

"Not so," replied Courtenay. "Let my folly and presumption be visited on my own head. I pray your highness to pass sentence on me at once. But do not let the princess suffer for my fault."

"So, so!" exclaimed Mary, with a bitter laugh, "I have brought you to your confessions at last. If I had before doubted your love for each other, your present conduct would have convinced me of it. You shall have your request, my lord," she added, turning to Courtenay. "I *will* pass sentence upon you."

"Hold, madam," cried Gardiner. "Before the sentence is passed and irrevocable, reflect—if only for one moment. You are a great queen, and the daughter of a great king. But the rashness of one moment may annihilate all your future peace, destroy the hopes of your people, and the prosperity of your reign. The conduct of the Earl of Devonshire is unpardonable, I allow. But for your own sake, for the sake of your kingdom —not for his—I beseech you to overlook it. That he loves you, I am assured."

"Let him declare as much," said Renard.

"Here me, then," replied Courtenay, throwing himself at the

queen's feet. "I bitterly repent my rashness; and though I can never hope to be restored to the place I once held in your majesty's affections, I shall never cease to reproach myself, never cease to love you."

Mary was visibly moved.

"If I thought you sincere?" she said.

"*I* will answer for his sincerity," said Gardiner.

"And I," added De Noailles. "She relents," he continued in a whisper to Courtenay. "Improve the advantage you have gained."

"Grant me an instant's private audience with your majesty," implored Courtenay; "and I feel certain I can remove all your doubts."

"No, my lord," rejoined Mary. "As our rupture has been public, our reconciliation (if it takes place) shall be public also."

"It must never take place," remarked Renard, in an undertone.

"Peace, sir," said the queen, aloud. "As far as our government is concerned, we are content to follow your counsel. But in matters of the heart we shall follow its dictates alone."

"Your majesty is in the right," observed Gardiner.

"Declare, my lord," pursued Mary, addressing Courtenay, "in the presence of these gentlemen, in that of our sister—*rival* we ought to say—that you have deceived her, and, though your conduct may have misled her, have never swerved from your devotion to ourself."

While the queen pronounced these words, Renard's keen glance wandered from Courtenay to Elizabeth. The latter was violently agitated, and seemed to await the earl's answer as if her fate hung upon it.

"Do you assert this, my lord?" demanded Mary.

"Hesitate, and you are lost, and so is the princess," whispered De Noailles.

Before Courtenay could reply, Elizabeth fainted and would have fallen, if Renard had not flown to her assistance.

"Summon our maids of honour, and let her be instantly cared for," said Mary, with a look of ill-disguised satisfaction. "My lord," she added to Courtenay, "you are forgiven."

The earl hastily, and with some confusion, expressed his thanks, while, in obedience to the queen's mandate, Elizabeth was removed.

"And now, my lord," said Mary to him, "I must pass from my own affairs to those of my kingdom. I will not detain you

further—nor you, M. De Noailles. But I must crave your attendance, my lord, for a few minutes," she added, turning to Gardiner, "and yours, M. Renard."

"Your highness may always command my best counsel," replied the latter, in a slightly sarcastic tone, "provided you will act upon it."

"Farewell, my lord," said Mary, extending her hand to Courtenay, which he pressed to his lips. "I shall walk upon the Tower Green in an hour, and shall expect you there."

"I will attend your majesty," replied Courtenay. And accompanied by De Noailles, he quitted the chamber.

"You have had a narrow escape, my lord," remarked the French ambassador, as they traversed the long gallery together.

"So narrow that I thought I had lost all chance of the crown," replied Courtenay. "It is the work of that perfidious Simon Renard. But if I live an hour, I will requite him."

"You are the victor, my lord," returned De Noailles. "Maintain your present position, and you may defy his utmost malice."

"Tarry with me a moment, M. De Noailles," said Courtenay, "and you shall see how I will avenge myself upon him."

"Prudence, my good lord, prudence," replied De Noailles. "Your rashness has already put you once in his power. Do not let it do so a second time."

"I will punish his treachery, if it costs me my life," replied Courtenay.

CHAPTER IX

OF THE DUEL BETWEEN COURTENAY AND SIMON RENARD; AND HOW IT WAS INTERRUPTED

MEANWHILE, a long discussion was carried on between Mary and her councillors, as to the best means of effecting the entire restoration of the Romish religion.

"I have a letter from Cardinal Pole," observed the queen, "wherein his eminence urges me to adopt no half measures."

"It will not be safe to do so as matters now stand, gracious madam," replied Gardiner. "You must proceed cautiously. The noxious weed, heresy, has taken too deep a root in this country to be forcibly extirpated. I need not remind you of the murmurs that followed the celebration of mass in the chapel in the White Tower, for the repose of the king your brother's soul—of Cranmer's vehement opposition, of the lord mayor's remon-

strance, because mass was sung in another chapel in the city, of the riot for a similar cause in Smithfield, of the dagger thrown at Doctor Bourne, when he preached at Saint Paul's Cross, and inveighed against the deprivation of our prelates during the late reign. Your majesty did wisely to declare, at my suggestion, that although your conscience is stayed in matters of religion, yet you meant not to compel and constrain other men's consciences. Abide by this declaration a little longer. The two chief opponents of our religion, Ridley and Latimer, are already prisoners in the fortress, and Cranmer will be speedily brought hither."

"So speedily, my lord, that he shall be lodged within it to-day," replied Mary. "The order is already signed for his committal on a charge of high treason for counselling our disinheritance, and aiding the Duke of Northumberland with horse and men against us in the revolt of the Lady Jane Grey."

"When will your highness have him arraigned?" asked Gardiner.

"After our coronation," replied Mary; "when Lady Jane Grey and her husband shall also be tried."

"Suffolk is already liberated," remarked Renard; "and yet he was more deeply implicated than Cranmer."

"True," replied Mary; "but he is not so dangerous."

"The counsel of my master, the emperor," rejoined Renard, "as I have more than once stated to your highness, is to spare none of the rebels, above all, the Lady Jane Grey, who, though she may have been the instrument of others, is yet in the eyes of the people the principal offender."

"Poor Lady Jane!" exclaimed Mary, in a compassionate tone. "She is very young—very beautiful. I would rather reconcile her to our church than doom her to the block."

"I do not despair of being able to accomplish her conversion," said Gardiner, "though she is an obstinate heretic. I have appointed to-morrow for a conference with her on the subject of her religion, and I trust to be able to convince her of her errors."

"With your lordship's permission, I will attend the conference," said Renard.

"By all means," replied Gardiner. "It will take place in the Beauchamp Tower. Her husband, Lord Guilford Dudley, has become a proselyte, and they will be both present at the disputation."

"I leave the care of her soul in your hands, my lord," replied Mary. "And now I must to my own devotions."

So saying, she dismissed them, and proceeded to an oratory, where she was joined by her confessor, Feckenham.

On issuing from the audience-chamber, Renard perceived De Noailles and Courtenay pacing the gallery.

"I have waited for you, sir," said the latter, advancing to meet him.

"I am sorry to have detained your lordship so long," replied Renard.

"Apologies are needless," rejoined Courtenay. "M. Renard, you are a double-faced villain."

"Rail on, my lord, and welcome," replied Renard, contemptuously. "Your ill-humour has no effect on me!"

"Coward! will not that move you?" cried Courtenay, taking off his glove, and striking him with it in the face.

"Ha!" exclaimed Renard fiercely, and half-unsheathing his sword. "Follow me, my lord, and you shall find me as prompt to avenge an insult as you can be to offer one."

"My lord," interposed De Noailles, "and you, M. Renard, I warn you before you proceed further in this quarrel, that it will deeply offend the queen."

"It was not my seeking," replied Renard, sternly. "But since it is forced upon me, I will not be stayed. As his lordship has found no difficulty in duping her majesty with a feigned passion, so, if he survives, he may readily make out his case by an equally false statement that I was the aggressor."

"Insolent!" cried Courtenay. "Fool that I was to place any faith in one in whom the whole perfidy of his country seems concentred. Follow me, and quickly, or I will repeat the blow—unless," he added with bitter scorn, "like your own arrogant but cowardly nation you prefer avenging it by assassination."

"The cowardice will be yours, my lord," rejoined Renard, haughtily, "if you attempt to repeat the blow—nay, if you tarry here longer, I shall think you desire to attract the attention of some of her majesty's attendants, and by causing us to be arrested, contrive to escape my vengeance."

"Trust me, sir, I have no such intention," replied Courtenay. "An Englishman never deals a blow without allowing his adversary to return it. M. De Noailles, I request your attendance at the duel. It will be a mortal combat, for I will neither give mercy nor receive it from this perfidious villain."

"Pardon me, my lord, if I refuse your request," replied De Noailles. "I pledge my word that I will not interrupt you, nor

cause you to be interrupted during the adjustment of your differences. But I will be no party to the duel."

"As you please," replied Courtenay. "Come then, sir," he added, turning to Renard, "and let the recollection of the insult I have offered you be fresh in your memory."

"M. De Noailles," said Renard, "I take you to witness before I depart, that I have not sought this quarrel. Whatever ensues, you will avouch the truth."

"Undoubtedly," replied De Noailles. "Whither are you going?" he demanded.

"To the palace-garden," replied Courtenay. "It is the only place in the Tower where we can be free from interruption. Beneath the trees we shall be unobserved."

"Lead on then, my lord," cried Renard, impatiently. "The affair ought to have been arranged by this time."

Hastily quitting the corridor, they descended the grand staircase, and traversing with rapid steps a long suite of apartments, passed through a small door opening from the range of building called the queen's gallery, upon the privy garden. At the western angle of this garden stood a grove of trees, and thinking themselves unobserved they hastened towards it.

It chanced, however, at this moment that Xit was passing along one of the walks, and struck by their furious looks he immediately conjectured their errand, and being, as has before been shown, of an inquisitive turn, determined to watch them, and with this view struck into a shrubbery, which effectually screened him from observation.

On reaching the grove, Renard instantly divested himself of his cloak, and drawing his rapier and dagger, placed himself in an attitude of defence. Courtenay did not remove his mantle, and therefore he was in readiness before his adversary. The preliminary forms always observed by the combatants of the period, being gone through, the conflict commenced with great fury on the side of Courtenay, and with equal animosity, but more deliberation, on that of Renard. As the latter was the most perfect swordsman of his time, he felt little doubt as to the result of the combat; but still the fury of the earl was so irresistible that he broke through his surest wards. In one of these furious passes Renard received a slight wound in the arm, and roused by the pain, he forgot his cautious system, and returned Courtenay's thrusts with others equally desperate.

Feeling that he was no match for his antagonist, who was evidently his superior both in force and skill, the earl now

determined to bring the combat to a close, before his strength should be further exhausted. Collecting all his energies, he dashed upon Renard with such impetuosity, that the latter was compelled to retreat, and his foot catching against the root of a tree, he fell, and lay at the mercy of his antagonist.

"Strike!" he cried. "I will never yield."

"No," replied Courtenay. "I will not take this advantage. Arise, and renew the combat."

"Your courtesy is like your attachment, misplaced, my lord," replied Renard, springing to his feet, and preparing to attack him. "Look to yourself."

The combat recommenced with fresh fury, and must have speedily terminated fatally, if a sudden interruption had not occurred. Alarmed by the deadly nature of the strife, and thinking he should gain credit with the queen if he prevented any accident to her favourite, Xit no sooner beheld the swords drawn, than he ran off as swiftly as he could to the garden-gate, near the Lanthorn Tower, where he knew Magog was stationed. The giant did not require to be bid twice to accompany him; but grasping his immense halbert, hurried in the direction of the fight, and reached the grove just as it had recommenced.

The combatants were so occupied with each other, and so blinded with rage, that they did not hear his approach. Magog, however, soon made them sensible of his presence. Bidding them in a voice of thunder lay down their arms, and finding himself wholly disregarded, he rushed between them, and seizing each by the doublet, hurled them forcibly backwards, swearing lustily that if either advanced another footstep, he would fell him to the ground with his partisan. By this time Xit, who had come up, drew his sword, and seconded the giant's threat, adding with his usual coxcombical dignity, "My lords, I command you, in the queen's name, to deliver up your weapons to me."

Upon this, he took off his cap, and strutting up to Courtenay, demanded his sword.

"What if I refuse it, sirrah?" said the earl, who in spite of his indignation, could scarcely help laughing at the dwarf's assurance.

"Your lordship, I am assured, will not compel me to enforce its delivery," replied Xit.

"I will not," replied Courtenay, delivering the weapon to him.

"I shall not fail to report your magnanimity to my royal

mistress," returned Xit. "Now yours, worshipful sir," he added, to Renard.

"Take it," replied the ambassador, flinging his rapier on the ground. "It is fit that an affair so ridiculously begun, should have such a ridiculous termination."

"It is not ended, sir," rejoined Courtenay.

"You will note that, Magog," interposed Xit. "His lordship says it is not ended. Her majesty must hear of this. I take upon myself to place you both in arrest. Attach their persons, Magog."

"This insolence shall not go unpunished," cried Courtenay, angrily.

"Heed him not, Magog," whispered Xit. "I am sure her highness will approve our conduct. At all events, I take the responsibility of the arrest upon myself—though I promise thee, if there is any reward, thou shalt share it. I arrived at a critical minute for your lordship," he added, in an undertone to Courtenay. "Your adversary's blade was within an inch of your breast."

"Peace, knave," cried Courtenay.

"Bring them along, Magog," said Xit, "while I run to the palace to apprise her majesty of the occurrence, and ascertain her pleasure concerning them."

"Hold!" exclaimed Courtenay. "Take this purse, and keep silence on the subject."

"No, my lord," replied Xit, with an offended look, "I am above a bribe. Had your lordship—but no matter. Magog, you will answer for their peaceable conduct. I am off to the palace."

And he hurried away, while the giant followed at a slow pace with Courtenay and Renard.

CHAPTER X

OF THE CONFERENCE HELD BETWEEN BISHOP GARDINER AND LADY JANE GREY IN THE BEAUCHAMP TOWER

During all this time, Jane was kept a close prisoner in the Brick Tower, and neither allowed to hold any intercourse with her husband, nor to correspond with him. Heart-breaking as the deprivation was to her in the first instance, she became in some degree reconciled to it, on learning from her jailer, who

displayed as much humanity towards her as was consistent with his office, that he bore his fate with the utmost fortitude and resignation.

Entertaining no hopes of mercy, Jane's whole time was past in preparation for her end. Except the few hours of refreshment actually required by nature, every moment was devoted to the most intense application, or to fervent prayer. By degrees, all trace of sorrow vanished from her features, and they assumed a spiritualised and almost angelic expression. Lovely as she was before, she looked far more lovely now—or rather her beauty was of a more refined and exalted character. She was frequently visited by the queen's confessor, Feckenham, who used every effort to induce her to renounce her religion, but in vain. When told that the sure way to her majesty's favour would be to embrace the faith of Rome, she replied that, anxious as she was to obtain the queen's forgiveness, she could not purchase it at the price of her salvation, and that the only favour she desired was to pass the brief residue of her days unmolested. Northumberland's apostacy was a terrible shock to her. Feckenham brought the intelligence, and boasted of the convert the Catholic Church had gained.

"You may have induced the duke to recant with his lips, sir," replied Jane; "but of this I am assured, he died a Protestant in heart."

"It may be so," rejoined Feckenham. "He was hypocrite enough to act thus. It is enough for us that he publicly abjured his errors. And before long, others of his house will follow his example."

"What mean you, sir?" demanded Jane, anxiously. "You do not surely allude to my husband?"

Feckenham made no reply, but with a significant smile departed.

The insinuation was not lost upon Jane. And now she more than ever lamented that she was not near her husband, to strengthen his wavering faith, and confirm his resolution. Well knowing that his character in a great measure resembled his father's, she feared that the inducement held out by his enemies might be too much for his resistance. Unable to communicate her fears to him, or to offer any of the counsel her heart suggested, she could only relieve her distresses by earnest supplications in his behalf. But even prayer did not on this occasion afford her the consolation it was wont to do. The Duke of Northumberland's recantation perpetually haunted her;

and the thought that her husband might be made a similar example filled her with inexpressible dread.

While suffering from these agonising reflections, she received another visit from Feckenham. The expression of his countenance, which was triumphing and sinister, alarmed her, and she almost felt unwilling, though at the same time anxious, to question him.

After enjoying her suspense for a few minutes, he said, "Daughter, you blamed the Duke of Northumberland for being reconciled to our church. What, if I inform you that Lord Guilford Dudley has been likewise converted?"

"I should indeed be grieved to hear it," replied Jane, in a tone of anguish; "but I trust it is not so."

"It is as I have said," answered Feckenham.

"Heaven pardon him!" exclaimed Jane. "You bring me ill news, indeed. I had far rather you came to tell me the executioner was waiting for me—nay, that my husband was about to be led to the block—than this fatal intelligence. I thought our separation would be short. But now I find it will be eternal."

"You are in error, daughter," rejoined Feckenham, sternly. "You will neither be separated from your husband in this world, nor the next, if you are equally conformable."

"Am I to understand, then, that his apostacy, for I can give it no milder term, has been purchased by an offer of pardon?" demanded Jane.

"I said not so, daughter," replied Feckenham; "but I now tell you that his hopes of grace rest with yourself."

"With me?" cried Jane, with a look of agony.

"With you, daughter," repeated the confessor. "Much as it rejoices our pious queen to win over one soul like that of Lord Guilford Dudley to the true faith, gladly as she will receive his recantation, she will pledge herself to mercy only on one condition."

"And that is—"

"Your conversion."

"A safe promise, for her clemency will never be exhibited," replied Jane. "Not even to purchase my husband's life would I consent. I would willingly die to bring him back to the paths from which he has strayed. But I will not surrender myself to Rome and her abominations."

"Your firmness, in a good cause, daughter, would elicit my approbation," replied Feckenham. "As it is, it only excites my

compassion. I am deeply concerned to see one so richly gifted so miserably benighted; one so fair so foully spotted with heresy. I should esteem it a glorious victory over Satan to rescue your soul from perdition, and will spare no pains to do so."

"It is in vain, sir," replied Jane; "and if I have hitherto repressed my anger at these solicitations, it is because feeling firm in myself, I look upon them merely as an annoyance, to which it is my duty to submit with patience. But when I perceive the mischief they have done to others, I can no longer contain my indignation. Yours is a pernicious and idolatrous religion, a religion founded on the traditions of men, not on the word of God, a religion detracting from the merits of our Saviour, substituting mummery for the simple offices of prayer; and though I will not be uncharitable enough to assert that its sincere professors will not be saved, yet I am satisfied, that no one to whom the true light of heaven has once been vouchsafed, can believe in it, or be saved by it."

"Since you are thus obstinate, daughter," replied Feckenham, "let us dispute point by point, and dogma by dogma, of our creeds, and I think I can convince you of the error in which you rest. Do not fear wearying me. I cannot be better employed."

"Pardon me, then, sir, if I reply, than I *can* be far better employed," returned Jane; "and, though I would not shrink from such a discussion—were it useful—and do not fear its result, yet, as no good can arise from it, I must decline it."

"As you please, daughter," rejoined Feckenham. "But I must own that your refusal to accept my challenge seems a tacit admission of the weakness of your cause."

"Put what construction you please upon it, sir, so you leave me in peace," replied Jane. "I will fight the good fight when called upon to do so. But I will not waste the little time that remains to me in fruitless disputation."

"Before I depart, however, daughter," rejoined Feckenham, "let me deliver your husband's message to you."

"What is it?" inquired Jane, eagerly, "and yet, I almost dread to ask."

"He implored you not to be his executioner," answered Feckenham.

"*His* executioner!—my husband's executioner!—oh, no!—no! that I can never be!" cried Jane, bursting into tears.

"That you *will* be, unless you consent," replied the priest, coldly.

"I beseech you, sir, urge me no further," rejoined Jane. "I would lay down my life for my husband a thousand times, but I cannot save him thus. Tell him that I will pray for him night and day—and oh! tell him that his swerving from his faith has wounded me more severely than the axe will ever do."

"I shall tell him that I left you in the same obstinate state I found you, deaf to the voice of truth, inaccessible to natural affection, and besotted with heresy. Daughter, you love not your husband."

"Not love him!" echoed Jane, passionately. "But no, you shall not shake my firmness. I thought to die calmly, and I looked forward to death as to a certain restoration to my husband. This hope is now at an end. It is you, sir, who are his true executioner. Not content with robbing him of his eternal happiness, you impute his destruction to me. Tell him I love him too well to grant his request, and if he loves me, and hopes to be reunited to me in the bonds of unceasing happiness, he will remain unshaken in his adherence to the Protestant faith."

"Then you absolutely refuse compliance?" demanded Feckenham.

"Absolutely," replied Jane.

"Your husband's blood be upon your head!" exclaimed the confessor, in a menacing voice.

And without another word, he departed.

As soon as the door of her chamber was locked, and Jane felt herself alone, she threw herself on her knees, and was about to pour out her heart in earnest supplication for her husband, but the shock had been too great for her, and she fainted. On reviving, she was scarcely able to move, and it was some time before she entirely regained her strength.

Repairing to the palace, Feckenham detailed the interview to the queen, observing in conclusion, "I still do not despair of her conversion, and shall leave no means untried to accomplish it."

The next day he again visited Jane, but with no better success. He found her in great affliction, and she earnestly implored to be allowed to see her husband, if only for a few minutes, and in the presence of witnesses. The confessor replied that in her present frame of mind her request could not be granted. But that if she showed herself conformable she should no longer be separated from him, and he would answer for their ultimate pardon.

"I have already acquainted you with my determination, sir," rejoined Jane, "and you will seek in vain to move me. The rack should not shake my constancy; neither shall the mental torture to which you subject me."

When Feckenham reported the result of his mission to Gardiner, the bishop decided upon holding a religious conference with the captive, feeling confident that notwithstanding her boasted learning and zeal, he could easily overcome her in argument. To induce her to assent to the plan, it was agreed that a meeting should be allowed between her and her husband on the occasion. When the matter was announced to Jane, she readily expressed her acquiescence, and begged that it might not be delayed, as she had no preparation to make. "Take heed," she observed, in conclusion, "lest I win back from you the treasure you have gained."

"We shall add to it a greater treasure—yourself, madam," replied the confessor.

On the following day, she was summoned by an officer of the guard to attend the bishop in the Beauchamp Tower. Taking up a volume of the Holy Scriptures lying on a table beside her, and wrapping herself in an ermined surcoat, she arose and followed the officer—quitting her chamber for the first time for nearly two months. On issuing into the open air, the affect was almost overpowering, and she could not repress her tears.

It was a bright, sunshiny morning, and everything looked so beautiful, so happy, that the contrast with her recent sufferings was almost too much for her. Bearing up resolutely against her feelings, in order forcibly to divert her attention she fixed her eyes upon the reverend walls of the White Tower, which she was at that moment passing. Near it she perceived the three gigantic warders, all of whom doffed their caps as she approached. Og coughed loudly, as if to clear his throat; Gog hastily brushed the moisture from his eyes with his sleeve; while Magog, who was the most tender-hearted of the three, fairly blubbered aloud. Xit, who formed one of the group, but who was the least affected, bade her be of good cheer.

This encounter was so far of service to Jane, that it served to distract her thoughts, and she had in a great measure regained her composure, when another incident occurred, which had nearly upset her altogether. As she passed near the porch of Saint Peter's Chapel, she beheld Simon Renard emerge from it. And if she felt her blood chilled by the sight of her implacable foe, her alarm was not diminished on hearing him call to her

guards to bring her within the chapel. At a loss to comprehend the meaning of this mysterious summons, Jane entered the sacred structure. Coldly saluting her, Renard informed her that her husband was within the chapel. Trembling at the intimation, Jane looked eagerly round. At first, she could discern nothing; but, guided by the ambassador's malignant glance, she perceived a figure kneeling in front of the altar. Instantly recognising her husband, with an exclamation of delight that made him spring to his feet, she rushed forward and threw herself into his arms.

After the first passionate emotion had subsided, Jane inquired how he came to be there.

"Do you not know?" replied Lord Guilford. "Or have you been kept in ignorance of the terrible tragedy which has been recently enacted? Look there!" And he pointed downwards.

Jane obeyed, and saw that she was standing upon a gravestone, on which was inscribed in newly-cut letters—John Dudley, Duke of Northumberland.—DECAPITATED AUGUST 22, 1553.

Jane trembled and leaned upon her husband for support.

"Here is the victim, there the executioner," said Lord Guilford, pointing from the grave to Renard.

"Three months ago," said the ambassador, who stood with folded arms at a little distance from them, "within this very chapel, I told the Duke of Northumberland he would occupy that grave. My words have been fulfilled. And I now tell you, Lord Guilford Dudley, and you Lady Jane, that unless you are reconciled with our holy church, you will rest beside him."

With these words he quitted the chapel, and the guards closing round the captives, they were compelled to follow. During their short walk, Jane passionately implored her husband not to yield to the persuasions of his enemies. He hung his head and returned no answer, and she inferred from his silence, that he was not disposed to yield to her solicitations. They were now close upon the Beauchamp Tower, when Dudley, pointing to a barred window in the upper story of one of its turrets, observed, "Within that room my father passed the last few weeks of his existence."

Ascending the spiral stone stairs of the tower, they passed beneath the arched doorway, and entered the principal chamber, now used—as has more than once been observed—as the mess-room of the garrison. Here they found Gardiner awaiting their

arrival. He was seated on a high-backed arm-chair between Bonner and Feckenham, who occupied stools on either side of him, while behind him stood the friar who had attended the Duke of Northumberland on the scaffold. Across one of the deep and arched embrasures of the room looking towards the south, a thick curtain was drawn, and before it, at a small table covered with a crimson cloth, on which writing materials were placed, sat a secretary prepared to take down the heads of the disputation. On Jane's appearance, Gardiner and the other ecclesiastics arose and gravely saluted her.

"You are welcome, daughter," said the bishop. "You have come hither an unbeliever in our doctrines. I trust you will depart confirmed in the faith of Rome."

"I am come to vanquish, not to yield, my lord," replied Jane, firmly. "And as I shall give you no quarter, so I expect none."

"Be it so," rejoined the bishop. "To you, my son," he continued, addressing Lord Guilford, "I can hold very different language. I can give you such welcome as the prodigal son received, and rejoice in your reconciliation with your heavenly father. And I sincerely trust that this noble lady, your consort, will not be a means of turning aside that mercy which her most gracious majesty is desirous of extending towards you."

"My lord," said Jane, stepping between them, and steadfastly regarding the bishop, "if I am wrong and my husband is right, the queen will do well not to punish the innocent with the guilty. And you, dear Dudley," she continued, taking his hand, and gazing at him with streaming eyes, "grant me one favour, the last I shall ever ask of you."

"Daughter!" observed Gardiner, severely, "I cannot permit this interference. I must interpose my authority to prevent your attempting to shake your husband's determination."

"All I ask, my lord, is this," rejoined Jane, meekly; "that he will abide the issue of the disputation before he renounces his faith for ever. It is a request, which I am sure neither he, nor *you* will refuse."

"It is granted, daughter," replied Gardiner; "the rather that I feel so certain of convincing you that I doubt not you will then as strongly urge his reconciliation as you now oppose it."

"I would that not my husband alone, but that all Christendom could be auditors of our conference, my lord," replied Jane. "In this cause I am as strong, as in the late on which I was engaged I was weak. With this shield," she continued, raising the Bible which she carried beneath her arm, "I cannot sustain injury."

Advancing towards the table at which the secretary was seated, she laid the sacred volume upon it. She then divested herself of her surcoat, and addressed a few words, in an undertone, to her husband, while the ecclesiastics conferred together. While this was passing, Lord Guilford's eye accidentally fell upon his father's inscription on the wall, and he called Jane's attention to it. She sighed as she looked, and remarked, "Do not let your name be stained like his."

Perceiving Simon Renard gazing at them with malignant satisfaction, she then turned to Gardiner and said, "My lord, the presence of this person troubles me. I pray you, if he be not needful to our conference, that you will desire him to withdraw."

The bishop acquiesced, and having signified his wishes to the ambassador, he feigned to depart. But halting beneath the arched entrance, he remained an unseen witness of the proceedings.

A slight pause ensued, during which Jane knelt beside the chair, and fervently besought heaven to grant her strength for the encounter. She then arose, and fixing her eye upon Gardiner, said in a firm tone, "I am ready, my lord, I pray you question me, and spare me not."

No further intimation was necessary to the bishop, who immediately proceeded to interrogate her on the articles of her faith; and being a man of profound learning, well versed in all the subtleties of scholastic dispute, he sought in every way to confound and perplex her. In this he was likewise assisted by Bonner and Feckenham, both of whom were admirable theologians, and who proposed the most difficult questions to her. The conference lasted several hours, during which Jane sustained her part with admirable constancy, never losing a single point, but retorting upon her opponents questions which they were unable to answer, displaying such a fund of erudition, such powers of argument, such close and clear reasoning, and such profound knowledge of the tenets of her own faith and of theirs, that they were completely baffled and astounded. To a long and eloquent address of Gardiner's she replied at equal length, and with even more eloquence and fervour, concluding with these emphatic words—"My lord, I have lived in the Protestant faith, and in that faith I will die. In these sad times, when the power of your church is in the ascendant, it is perhaps needful there should be martyrs in ours to prove our sincerity. Amongst these I shall glory to be numbered, happy in the

thought that my firmness will be the means in after ages, of benefiting the Protestant church. On this rock," she continued, pointing to the Bible, which lay open before her, " my religion is built, and it will endure, when yours, which is erected on sandy foundations, shall be utterly swept away. In this sacred volume, I find every tenet of my creed, and I desire no other mediator between my Maker and myself."

As she said this, her manner was so fervid, and her look so full of inspiration, that all her listeners were awe-stricken, and gazed at her in involuntary admiration. The secretary suspended his task to drink in her words; and even Simon Renard, who, ensconced beneath the doorway, seemed no inapt representation of the spirit of evil, appeared confounded.

After a brief pause, Gardiner arose, saying, " The conference is ended, daughter. You are at liberty to depart. If I listen longer," he added, in an undertone to his companions, " I shall be convinced against my will."

" Then you acknowledge your defeat, my lord," said Jane, proudly.

" I acknowledge that it is in vain to make any impression on you," answered the bishop.

" Jane," cried her husband, advancing towards her, and throwing himself on his knees before her, " you have conquered, and I implore your forgiveness. I will never change a religion of which you are so bright an ornament."

" This is indeed a victory," replied Jane, raising him and clasping him to her bosom. " And now, my lord," she added to Gardiner, " conduct us to prison or the scaffold as soon as you please. Death has no further terrors."

After a parting embrace, and an assurance from her husband, that he would now remain constant in his faith, Jane was removed by her guard to the Brick Tower, while Lord Guilford was immured in one of the cells adjoining the room in which the conference had taken place.

CHAPTER XI

HOW CUTHBERT CHOLMONDELEY REVISITED THE STONE KITCHEN; AND HOW HE WENT IN SEARCH OF CICELY

CUTHBERT CHOLMONDELEY, who, it may be remembered, attended Lord Guilford Dudley, when he was brought from Sion House to the Tower, was imprisoned at the same time as that unfortunate nobleman, and lodged in the Nun's Bower—a place of confinement so named, and situated, as already mentioned, in the upper story of the Coal Harbour Tower. Here he was detained until after the Duke of Northumberland's execution, when, though he was not restored to liberty, he was allowed the range of the fortress. The first use he made of his partial freedom was to proceed to the Stone Kitchen, in the hope of meeting with Cicely; and his bitter disappointment may be conceived on finding that she was not there, nor was anything known of her by her foster-parents.

"Never since the ill-fated Queen Jane, whom they now call a usurper, took her into her service, have I set eyes upon her," said Dame Potentia, who was thrown into an agony of affliction by the sight of Cholmondeley. "Hearing from old Gunnora Braose, that when her unfortunate mistress was brought back a captive to the Tower she had been left at Sion House, and thinking she would speedily return, I did not deem it necessary to send for her; but when a week had elapsed, and she did not make her appearance, I desired her father to go in search of her. Accordingly, he went to Sion House, and learnt that she had been fetched away, on the morning after Queen Jane's capture, by a man who stated he had come from us. This was all Peter could learn. Alas! Alas!"

"Did not your suspicions alight on Nightgall?" asked Cholmondeley.

"Ay, marry, did they," replied the pantler's wife; "but he averred he had never quitted the Tower. And as I had no means of proving it upon him, I could do nothing more than tax him with it."

"He still retains his office of jailer, I suppose?" said Cholmondeley.

"Of a surety," answered Potentia; "and owing to Simon Renard, who, you may have heard, is her majesty's right

hand, he has become a person of greater authority than ever, and affects to look down upon his former friends."

"He cannot look down upon me at all events," exclaimed a loud voice behind them. And turning at the sound, Cholmondeley beheld the bulky figure of Gog darkening the doorway.

A cordial greeting passed between Cholmondeley and the giant, who in the same breath congratulated him upon his restoration to liberty, and condoled with him on the loss of his mistress.

"In the midst of grief we must perforce eat," observed the pantler, "and our worthy friends, the giants, as well as Xit, have often enlivened our board, and put care to flight. Perhaps you are not aware that Magog has been married since we last saw you."

"Magog married!" exclaimed Cholmondeley, in surprise.

"Ay, indeed!" rejoined Gog, "more persons than your worship have been astonished by it. And shall I let you into a secret—if ever husband was henpecked, it is my unfortunate brother. Your worship complains of losing your mistress. Would to heaven he had had any such luck! And the worst of it is that before marriage she was accounted the most amiable of her sex."

"Ay, that's always the case," observed Peter Trusbut; "though I must do my dame the justice to say that she did not disguise her qualities during my courtship."

"I will not hear a word uttered in disparagement of Dame Potentia," cried Ribald, who at that moment entered the kitchen, "even by her husband. Ah! Master Cholmondeley, I am right glad to see you. I heard of your release to-day. So, the pretty bird is flown you find—and whither none of us can tell, though I think I could give a guess at the fowler."

"So could I," replied Cholmondeley.

"I dare say both our suspicions tend to the same mark," said Ribald, "but we must observe caution now, for the person I mean is protected by Simon Renard, and others in favour with the queen."

"He is little better than an assassin," said Cholmondeley; "and has detained a wretched woman whom he has driven out of her senses by his cruelty a captive in the subterranean dungeons beneath the Devilin Tower."

And he proceeded to detail all he knew of the captive Alexia.

"This is very dreadful, no doubt," remarked Ribald, who had listened to the recital with great attention. "But as I

said before, Nightgall is in favour with persons of the greatest influence, and he is more dangerous and vindictive than ever. What you do, you must do cautiously."

By this time, the party had been increased by the arrival of Og and Xit, both of whom, but especially the latter, appeared rejoiced to meet with the young esquire.

"Ah! Master Cholmondeley," said the elder giant, heaving a deep sigh. "Times have changed with us all since we last met. Jane is no longer queen. The Duke of Northumberland is beheaded. Cicely is lost. And last and worst of all, Magog is married."

"So I have heard from Gog," replied Cholmondeley, "and I fear not very much to your satisfaction."

"Nor his own either," replied Og, shrugging his shoulders. "However it can't be helped. He must make the best of a bad bargain."

"It *might* be helped though," observed Xit. "Magog seems to have lost all his spirit since he married. If I had to manage her, I'd soon let her see the difference."

"You, forsooth!" exclaimed Dame Potentia, contemptuously. "Do you imagine any woman would stand in awe of you?"

And before the dwarf could elude her grasp, she seized him by the nape of the neck, and regardless of his cries, placed him upon the chimney-piece, amid a row of shining pewter plates.

"There you shall remain," she added, "till you beg pardon for your impertinence."

Xit looked piteously around, but seeing no hand extended to reach him down, and being afraid to spring from so great a height, he entreated the dame's forgiveness in a humble tone; and she thereupon set him upon the ground.

"A pretty person you are to manage a wife," said Dame Potentia, with a laugh, in which all, except the object of it, joined.

It being Cholmondeley's intention to seek out a lodging at one of the warder's habitations, he consulted Peter Trusbut on the subject, who said, that if his wife was agreeable, he should be happy to accommodate him in his own dwelling. The matter being referred to Dame Potentia she at once assented, and assigned him Cicely's chamber.

On taking possession of the room, Cholmondeley sank upon a chair, and for some time indulged the most melancholy reflections, from which he was aroused by a tremendous roar of laughter,

such as he knew could only be uttered by the gigantic brethren, proceeding from the adjoining apartment. Repairing thither, he found the whole party assembled round the table, which was, as usual, abundantly, or rather superabundantly, furnished. Amongst the guests were Magog and his wife, and the laughter he had heard was occasioned by a box administered by the latter to the ears of her spouse, because he had made some remark that sounded displeasing in her own. Magog bore the blow with the utmost philosophy, and applied himself for consolation to a huge pot of metheglin, which he held to his lips as long as a drop remained within it.

"We had good doings in Queen Jane's reign," remarked Peter Trusbut, offering the young esquire a seat beside him, "but we have better in those of Queen Mary."

And, certainly, his assertion was fully borne out by the great joints of beef, the hams, the pasties, and pullets with which the table groaned, and with which the giants were making their accustomed havoc. In the midst stood what Peter Trusbut termed a royal pasty, and royal it was, if size could confer dignity. It contained two legs of mutton, the pantler assured his guests, besides a world of other savoury matters, enclosed in a wall of rye-crust, and had taken twenty-four hours to bake.

"Twenty-four hours!" echoed Magog. "I will engage to consume it in the twentieth part of the time."

"For that observation you shall not even taste it," said his arbitrary spouse.

Debarred from the pasty, Magog made himself some amends by attacking a gammon of Bayonne bacon, enclosed in a paste, and though he found it excellent, he had the good sense to keep his opinion to himself. In this way, the supper passed off, Ribald jesting as usual, and devoting himself alternately to the two dames, Peter Trusbut carving the viands and assisting his guests, and the giants devouring all before them.

Towards the close of the repast, Xit, who always desired to be an object of attention, determined to signalise himself by some feat. Brandishing his knife and fork, he therefore sprang upon the table, and striding up to the royal pasty, peeped over the side, which was rather higher than himself, to take a survey of the contents.

While he was thus occupied, Dame Placida, who was sitting opposite to the pasty, caught him by the skirts of his doublet, and tossed him into the pie, while Peter Trusbut instantly covered it with the thick lid of crust, which had been removed

when it was first opened. The laughter which followed this occurrence was not diminished, as the point of Xit's knife appeared through the wall of pastry, nor was it long before he contrived to cut a passage out.

His re-appearance was hailed with a general shout of merriment. And Magog was by no means displeased at seeing him avenge himself by rushing towards his plump partner, and before she could prevent him, throw his arms round her, and imprint a sounding kiss upon her lips, while his greasy habiliments besmeared her dress.

Xit would have suffered severely for this retaliation, if it had not been for the friendly interference of Ribald, who rescued him from the clutches of the offended dame, and contrived with a tact peculiar to himself not only to appease her anger, but to turn it into mirth. Order being once more restored, the dishes and plates were removed, and succeeded by flagons and pots of ale and wine. The conversation then began to turn upon a masque about to be given to the queen by the Earl of Devonshire, at which they were all to assist, and arrangements were made as to the characters they should assume. Though this topic was interesting enough to the parties concerned, it was not so to Cholmondeley, who was about to retire to his own chamber to indulge his grief unobserved, when his departure was arrested by the sudden entrance of Lawrence Nightgall.

At the jailer's appearance, the merriment of the party instantly ceased, and all eyes were bent upon him.

"Your business here, Master Nightgall?" demanded Peter Trusbut, who was the first to speak.

"My business is with Master Cuthbert Cholmondeley," replied the jailer.

"State it then at once," replied the esquire, frowning.

"It is to ascertain where you intend to lodge, that I may report it to the lieutenant," said Nightgall.

"I shall remain here," replied Cholmondeley, sternly, "in Cicely's chamber."

"Here!" exclaimed Nightgall, starting, but instantly recovering himself, he turned to Peter Trusbut, and in a voice of forced composure, added, "You will be responsible then for him, Master Pantler, with your life and goods to the queen's highness, which, if he escapes, will both be forfeited."

"Indeed!" cried Trusbut, in dismay. "I—I—"

"Yes—yes—my husband understands all that," interposed Dame Potentia; "he will be answerable for him—and so will I."

"You will understand still further," proceeded Nightgall, with a smile of triumph, "that he is not to stir forth except for one hour at mid-day, and then that his walks are to be restricted to the Green."

While this was passing, Og observed in a whisper to Xit, "If I were possessed of that bunch of keys at Nightgall's girdle, I could soon find Cicely."

"Indeed!" said Xit. "Then you shall soon have them." And the next minute he disappeared under the table.

"You have a warrant for what you do, I suppose?" demanded Og, desirous of attracting the jailer's attention.

"Behold it," replied Nightgall, taking a parchment from his vest. He then deliberately seated himself, and producing an inkhorn and pen, wrote Peter Trusbut's name upon it.

"Master Pantler," he continued, delivering it to him, "I have addressed it to you. Once more I tell you, you will be responsible for the prisoner. And with this I take my leave."

"Not so fast, villain," said Cholmondeley, seizing his arm with a firm grasp, "where is Cicely?"

"You will never behold her more," replied Nightgall.

"What have you done with the captive Alexia?" pursued the esquire, bitterly.

"She likewise is beyond your reach," answered the jailer, moodily. And shaking off Cholmondeley's grasp, he rushed out of the chamber with such haste as nearly to upset Xit, who appeared to have placed himself purposely in his path.

This occurrence threw a gloom over the mirth of the party. The conversation flagged, and even an additional supply of wine failed to raise the spirits of the guests. Just as they were separating, hasty steps were heard on the stairs, and Nightgall again presented himself. Rushing up to Cholmondeley, who was sitting apart wrapt in gloomy thought, he exclaimed in a voice of thunder, "My keys! my keys! you have stolen my keys."

"What keys?" demanded the esquire, starting to his feet. "Those of Alexia's dungeon?"

"Restore them instantly," cried Nightgall, furiously, "or I will instantly carry you back to the Nun's Bower."

"Were they in my possession," replied Cholmondeley, "nothing should force them from me till I had searched your most secret hiding-places."

"'Tis therefore you stole them," cried Nightgall. "See where my girdle has been cut," he added, appealing to Peter

Trusbut. "If they are not instantly restored, I will convey you all before the lieutenant, and you know how he will treat the matter."

Terrified by this threat, the pantler entreated the esquire, if he really had the keys, to restore them. But Cholmondeley positively denied the charge, and after a long and fruitless search, all the party except Xit, who had disappeared, having declared their ignorance of what had become of them, Nightgall at last departed, in a state of the utmost rage and mortification.

Soon after this, the party broke up, and Cholmondeley retired to his own room. Though the pantler expressed no fear of his escaping, he did not neglect the precaution of locking the door. Throwing himself on a couch, the esquire, after a time, fell into a sort of doze, during which he was haunted by the image of Cicely, who appeared pale and suffering, and as if imploring his aid. So vivid was the impression, that he started up, and endeavoured to shake it off. In vain. He could not divest himself of the idea that she was at that moment subjected to the persecutions of Nightgall. Having endured this anguish for some hours, and the night being far advanced, he was about to address himself once more to repose, when he heard the lock turned, and glancing in the direction of the door, perceived it cautiously opened by Xit. The mannikin placed his finger to his lips in token of silence, and held up a huge bunch of keys, which Cholmondeley instantly conjectured were those lost by Nightgall. Xit then briefly explained how he had possessed himself of them, and offered them to Cholmondeley.

"I love the fair Cicely," he said, "hate Nightgall, and entertain a high respect for your worship. I would gladly make you happy with your mistress if I can. You have now at least the means of searching for her, and heaven grant a favourable issue to the adventure. Follow me, and tread upon the points of your feet, for the pantler and his spouse occupy the next room."

As they crossed the kitchen, they heard a sound proceeding from an adjoining room, which convinced them that neither Peter Trusbut nor Dame Potentia were on the watch.

"They don't snore *quite* so loud as my friends the giants," whispered Xit; "but they have tolerably good lungs."

Having, at Xit's suggestion, armed himself with a torch and materials to light it, and girded on a sword which he found reared against the wall, the esquire followed his dwarfish companion down a winding stone staircase, and speedily issued from the postern.

The night was profoundly dark, and they were therefore unobserved by the sentinels on the summit of the By-ward Tower, and on the western ramparts. Without delaying a moment, Cholmondeley hurried towards the Devilin Tower. Xit accompanied him, and after some little search they found the secret door, and by a singular chance Cholmondeley, on the first application, discovered the right key. He then bade farewell to the friendly dwarf, who declined attending him further, and entering the passage, and locking the door within-side, struck a light and set fire to the torch.

Scarcely knowing whither to shape his course, and fully aware of the extent of the dungeons he should have to explore, Cholmondeley resolved to leave no cell unvisited, until he discovered the object of his search. For some time, he proceeded along a narrow arched passage, which brought him to a stone staircase, and descending it, his further progress was stopped by an iron door. Unlocking it, he entered another passage, on the right of which was a range of low cells, all of which he examined, but they were untenanted, except one, in which he found a man whom he recognised as one of the Duke of Northumberland's followers. He did not, however, dare to liberate him, but with a few words of commiseration passed on.

Turning off on the left, he proceeded for some distance, until being convinced by the hollow sound of the floor that there were vaults beneath, he held his torch downwards, and presently discovered an iron ring in one of the stones. Raising it, he beheld a flight of steps, and descending them, found himself in a lower passage about two feet wide, and apparently of con-siderable length. Hastily tracking it, he gradually descended until he came to a level, where both the floor and ceiling were damp and humid. His torch now began to burn feebly, and threw a ghastly light upon the slimy walls and dripping roof.

While he was thus pursuing his way, a long and fearful shriek broke upon his ear, and thinking it might proceed from the captive Alexia, he hastened forward as quickly as the slippery path would allow him. It was evident, from the increasing humidity of the atmosphere, that he was approaching the river. As he advanced the cries grew louder, and he became aware, from the noise around, that legions of rats were fleeing before him. These loathsome animals were in such numbers, that Cholmondeley, half-fearing an attack from them, drew his sword.

After proceeding about fifty yards, the passage he was travers-

ing terminated in a low wide vault, in the centre of which was a deep pit. From the bottom of this abyss the cries resounded, and hurrying to its edge, he held down the torch, and discovered, at the depth of some twenty feet, a miserable half-naked object up to his knees in water, and defending himself from hundreds of rats that were swarming around him. While he was considering how he could accomplish the poor wretch's deliverance, who continued his shrieks more loudly than ever, asserting that the rats were devouring him, Cholmondeley perceived a ladder in a corner of the vault, and lowering it into the pit, the sides of which were perpendicular and flagged, instantly descended.

If he had been horrified at the vociferations of the prisoner, he was now perfectly appalled by the ghastly spectacle he presented. The unfortunate person had not exaggerated his danger when he said that the rats were about to devour him. His arms, body, and face were torn and bleeding, and as Cholmondeley approached he beheld numbers of his assailants spring from him and swim off. More dead than alive, the sufferer expressed his thanks, and taking him in his arms, Cholmondeley carried him up the ladder.

As soon as he had gained the edge of the pit, the esquire, who had been struck with the man's voice, examined his features by the light of the torch, and was shocked to find that he was one of the attendants of the Duke of Northumberland, with whom he was well acquainted. Addressing him by his name, the man instantly knew him, and informed him that he had been ordered into confinement by the council, and having given some offence to Nightgall, had been tortured and placed in this horrible pit.

"I have been here two days and nights," he said, "as far as I can guess, without food or light, and should soon have perished, had it not been for your aid; and, though I do not fear death, yet to die by inches—a prey to those horrible animals—was dreadful."

"Let me support you," returned Cholmondeley, taking his arm, "and while you have strength left, convey you to a more wholesome part of the dungeon, where you will be free from these frightful assailants, till I can procure you further assistance."

The poor prisoner gratefully accepted his offer, and lending him all the assistance in his power, Cholmondeley slowly retraced his course. Having reached the flight of stone steps leading to the trap-door, the esquire dragged his companion up

them, and finding it in vain to carry him further, and fearing he should be disappointed in the main object of his search, he looked around for a cell in which he could place him for a short time.

Perceiving a door standing ajar on the left, he pushed it open, and, entering a small cell, found the floor covered with straw, and, what was still more satisfactory to him, discovered a loaf on a shelf, and a large jug of water. Placing the prisoner on the straw, he spread the provisions before him, and having seen him partake of them, promised to return as soon as possible.

"Bestow no further thought on me," said the man. "I shall die content now."

Cholmondeley then departed, and proceeding along the passage he had just traversed, came to a wide arched opening on the left, which he entered, and pursuing the path before him, after many turnings, arrived at another low circular vault, about nineteen feet in diameter, which, from the peculiar form of its groined arches, he supposed (and correctly) must be situated beneath Devereux Tower.

Of a style of architecture of earlier date than the Beauchamp Tower, the Devilin, or, as it is now termed, the Devereux Tower, from the circumstance of Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex, the favourite of Queen Elizabeth, having been confined within it in 1601, has undergone less alteration than most of the other fortifications, and except in the modernising of the windows, retains much of its original character. In the dungeon into which Cholmondeley had penetrated, several curious spear-heads of great antiquity, and a gigantic thigh-bone, have been recently found.

At the further end of the vault Cholmondeley discovered a short flight of steps, and mounting them unlocked a door, which admitted him to another narrow winding stone stair-case. Ascending it, he presently came to a door on the left, shaped like the arched entrance in which it was placed. It was of strong oak, studded with nails, and secured by a couple of bolts.

Drawing back the fastenings, he unsheathed his sword, and pushing aside the door with the blade, raised his torch, and beheld a spectacle that filled him with horror. At one side of the cell, which was about six feet long and three wide, and contrived in the thickness of the wall, upon a stone seat rested the dead body of a woman, reduced almost to a skeleton. The face was turned from the door, but rushing forward he instantly

recognised its rigid features. On the wall close to where she lay, and evidently carved by her own hand, was traced her name—ALEXIA.

CHAPTER XII

HOW EDWARD UNDERHILL, THE "HOT-GOSPELLER," ATTEMPTED TO ASSASSINATE QUEEN MARY; AND HOW SHE WAS PRESERVED BY SIR HENRY BEDINGFELD

Among those who viewed Mary's accession to the throne with the greatest dissatisfaction, was the Hot-Gospeller. Foreseeing the danger with which the Protestant church was menaced, he regarded the change of sovereigns as one of the most direful calamities that could have befallen his country. The open expression of these sentiments more than once brought him into trouble, and he was for some time placed in durance. On his liberation, he observed more caution; and though his opinions were by no means altered, but rather strengthened, he no longer gave utterance to them.

During his imprisonment, he had pondered deeply upon the critical state of his religion; and having come to the conclusion that there was no means but one of averting the threatened storm, he determined to resort to that desperate expedient. Underhill's temporal interests had been as much affected as his spiritual by the new government. He was dismissed from the post he had hitherto held of gentleman-pensioner; and this circumstance, though he was, perhaps, scarcely conscious of it, contributed in no slight degree to heighten his animosity against the queen. Ever brooding upon the atrocious action he was about to commit, he succeeded in persuading himself, by that pernicious process of reasoning by which religious enthusiasts so often delude themselves into the commission of crime, that it was not only justifiable, but meritorious.

Though no longer a prisoner, or employed in any office, the Hot-Gospeller still continued to linger within the Tower, judging it the fittest place for the execution of his purpose. He took up his abode in a small stone cell, once tenanted by a recluse, and situated at the back of Saint Peter's Chapel, on the Green; devoting his days to prayer, and his nights to wandering, like a ghost, about the gloomiest and least-frequented parts of the fortress. He was often challenged by the sentinels—often

stopped, and conveyed to the guard-room by the patrol; but in time they became accustomed to him, and he was allowed to pursue his ramblings unmolested. By most persons he was considered deranged, and his wasted figure—for he almost denied himself the necessaries of life, confining his daily meal to a crust of bread, and a draught of water—together with his miserable attire, confirmed the supposition.

Upon one occasion, Mary herself, who was making the rounds of the fortress, happened to notice him, and ordered him to be brought before her. A blaze of fierce delight passed over the enthusiast's face when the mandate was conveyed to him. But his countenance fell the next moment, on recollecting that he was unarmed. Bitterly reproaching himself for his want of caution, he searched his clothes. He had not even a knife about him. He then besought the halberdiers who came for him to lend him a cloak and a sword, or even a partisan, to make a decent appearance before the queen. But laughing at the request, they struck him with the poles of their weapons, and commanded him to follow them without delay.

Brought into the royal presence, he with difficulty controlled himself. And nothing but the conviction that such a step would effectually defeat his design, prevented him from pouring forth the most violent threats against the queen. As it was, he loudly lamented her adherence to the faith of Rome, entreating her to abjure it, and embrace the new and wholesome doctrines, a course which, he predicted, would ensure her a long and prosperous reign, whereas, a continuance in her present idolatrous creed would plunge her kingdom in discord, endanger her crown, and, perhaps, end in her own destruction.

Regarding him as a half-crazed, but harmless enthusiast, Mary paid little attention to his address, which was sufficiently wild and incoherent to warrant the conclusion that his intellects were disordered. Pitying his miserable appearance, and inquiring into his mode of life, she ordered him better apparel, and directed that he should be lodged within the palace.

Underhill would have refused her bounty, but, at a gesture from Mary, he was removed from her presence.

This interview troubled him exceedingly. He could not reconcile the queen's destruction to his conscience so easily as he had heretofore done. Despite all his reasoning to the contrary, her generosity affected him powerfully. He could not divest himself of the idea that she might yet be converted; and persuading himself that the glorious task was reserved for him,

he resolved to make the attempt, before resorting to a darker mode of redress. Managing to throw himself, one day, in her way, as she was proceeding along the grand gallery, he immediately commenced a furious exhortation. But his discourse was speedily interrupted by the queen, who ordered her attendants to remove him into the court-yard, and cudgel him soundly; directing that any repetition of the offence should be followed by severer chastisement. This sentence was immediately carried into effect. The Hot-Gospeller bore it without a murmur. But he internally resolved to defer no longer his meditated design.

His next consideration was how to execute it. He could not effect his purpose by poison; and any attempt at open violence would, in all probability (as the queen was constantly guarded), be attended by failure. He therefore determined, as the surest means, to have recourse to fire-arms. And, being an unerring marksman, he felt certain of success in this way.

Having secretly procured an arquebus and ammunition, he now only awaited a favourable moment for the enterprise. This soon occurred. It being rumoured one night in the Tower that the queen was about to proceed by water to Whitehall on the following morning, he determined to station himself at some point on the line of road, whence he could take deliberate aim at her. On inquiring further, he ascertained that the royal train would cross the drawbridge leading from the south of the By-ward Tower to the wharf, and embark at the stairs. Being personally known to several officers of the guard, he thought he should have no difficulty in obtaining admittance to Saint Thomas's Tower, which, while it commanded the drawbridge, and was within shot, was yet sufficiently distant not to excite suspicion. Accordingly, at an early hour, on the next day, he repaired thither, wrapped in a cloak, beneath which he carried the implement of his treasonable intent.

As he anticipated, he readily procured admission, and, under pretence of viewing the passage of the royal train, was allowed a place at a narrow loophole in the upper story of one of the western turrets. Most of the guard being required on the summit of the fortification, Underhill was left alone in the small chamber. Loud shouts, and the discharge of artillery from the ramparts of the fortress, as well as from the roofs of the different towers, proclaimed that Mary had set forth. A few embers were burning on the hearth in the chamber occupied by the enthusiast. With these he lighted his tow-match, and offering

up a prayer for the success of his project, held himself in readiness for its execution.

Unconscious of the impending danger, Mary took her way towards the By-ward Tower. She was attended by a numerous retinue of nobles and gentlemen. .Near her walked one of her councillors, Sir Henry Bedingfeld, in whom she placed the utmost trust, and whose attachment to her had been often approved in the reigns of her father and brother, as well as during the late usurpation of Lady Jane Grey. Sir Henry was a grave-looking, dignified personage, somewhat stricken in years. He was attired in a robe of black velvet, of the fashion of Henry the Eighth's time, and his beard was trimmed in the same bygone mode. The venerable knight walked bare-headed, and carried a long staff, tipped with gold.

By this time Mary had reached the gateway opening upon the scene of her intended assassination. The greater part of her train had already passed over the drawbridge, and the deafening shouts of the beholders, as well as the renewed discharges of artillery, told that the queen was preparing to follow. This latter circumstance created a difficulty, which Underhill had not foreseen. Confined by the ramparts and the external walls of the moat, the smoke from the ordnance completely obscured the view of the drawbridge. Just, however, as Mary set foot upon it, and Underhill had abandoned the attempt in despair, a gust of wind suddenly dispersed the vapour. Conceiving this a special interposition of Providence in his favour, who had thus placed his royal victim in his hands, the Hot-Gospeller applied the match to the arquebus, and the discharge instantly followed.

The queen's life, however, was miraculously preserved. Sir Henry Bedingfeld, who was walking a few paces behind her, happening to cast his eye in the direction of Traitor's Tower, perceived the barrel of an arquebus thrust from a loop-hole in one of the turrets, and pointed towards her. Struck with the idea that some injury might be intended her, he sprung forward, and interposing his own person between the queen and the discharge, drew her forcibly backwards. The movement saved her. The ball passed through the knight's mantle, but without harming him further than ruffling the skin of his shoulder; proving by the course it took, that, but for his presence of mind, its fatal effect must have been certain.

All this was the work of an instant. Undismayed by the occurrence, Mary, who inherited all her father's intrepidity,

looked calmly round, and pressing Bedingfeld's arm in grateful acknowledgment of the service he had rendered her, issued her commands that the assassin should be secured, strictly examined, and, if need be, questioned on the rack. She then proceeded to the place of embarkation as deliberately as if nothing had happened. Pausing before she entered the barge, she thus addressed her preserver:—

"Sir Henry Bedingfeld, you have ever been my loyal servant. You were the first, during the late usurpation, to draw the sword in my defence, the first to raise troops for me, to join me at Framlingham, to proclaim me at Norwich. But you have thrown all these services into the shade by your last act of devotion. I owe my life to you. What can I do to evince my gratitude?"

"You have already done more than enough in thus acknowledging it, gracious madam," replied Sir Henry; "nor can I claim any merit for the action. Placed in my situation, I am assured there is not one of your subjects, except the miscreant who assailed you, who would not have acted in the same manner. I have done nothing, and deserve nothing."

"Not so, sir," returned Mary. "Most of my subjects, I believe, share your loyalty. But this does not lessen your desert. I should be wanting in all gratitude were I to let the service you have rendered me pass unrequited. And since you refuse to tell me how I can best reward you, I must take upon myself to judge for you. The custody of our person and of our fortress shall be entrusted to your care. Neither can be confided to worthier hands. Sir John Gage shall receive another appointment. Henceforth, you are Lieutenant of the Tower."

This gracious act was followed by the acclamations of the bystanders; and the air resounded with cries of "God save Queen Mary!—a Bedingfeld!—a Bedingfeld!"

"Your majesty has laid an onerous duty upon me, but I will endeavour to discharge it to your satisfaction," replied Sir Henry, bending the knee, and pressing her hand devotedly to his lips. And amid the increased acclamations of the multitude, Mary entered her barge.

Edward Underhill, meanwhile, whose atrocious purpose had been thus providentially defeated, on perceiving that his royal victim had escaped, uttered an ejaculation of rage and disappointment, flung down the arquebus, and folding his arms upon his bosom, awaited the result. Fortunately, an officer

accompanied the soldiers who seized him, or they would have hewn him in pieces.

The wretched man made no attempt to fly, or to defend himself, but when the soldiers rushed into the room, cried, "Go no further. I am he you seek."

"We know it, accursed villain," rejoined the foremost of their number, brandishing a sword over his head. "You have slain the queen."

"Would I had!" rejoined Underhill. "But it is not the truth. The Lord was not willing I should be the instrument of his vengeance."

"Hear the blasphemer!" roared another soldier, dealing him a blow in the mouth with the pummel of his dagger, that made the blood gush from his lips. "He boasts of the villainy he has committed."

"If my arm had not been stayed, I had delivered the land from idolatry and oppression," returned Underhill. "A season of terrible persecution is at hand, when you will lament as much as I do, that my design has been frustrated. The blood of the righteous would have been spared; the fagots at the stake unlighted; the groans of the martyrs unheard. But it is the Lord's will that this should be. Blessed be the name of the Lord!"

"Silence, hell-dog!" vociferated a third soldier, placing the point of his halbert at his breast. "Dost think Heaven would approve the foul deed thou meditatedst? Silence! I say, or I will drive my pike to thy heart."

"I will *not* be silent," rejoined Underhill, firmly. "So long as breath is left me, I will denounce the idolatrous queen by whom this unhappy land is governed, and pray that the crown may be removed from her head."

"Rather than thou shalt do so in my hearing, I will pluck out thy traitorous tongue by the roots," returned the soldier who had last spoken.

"Peace," interposed the officer. "Secure him, but harm him not. He may have confederates. It is important that all concerned in this atrocious attempt should be discovered."

"I have no accomplice," replied Underhill. "My own heart dictated what my hand essayed."

"May that hand perish in everlasting fire for the deed!" rejoined the officer. "But if there be power in torture to make you confess who set you on, it shall not be left untried."

"I have already spoken the truth," replied the enthusiast;

" and the sharpest engine ever devised by ruthless man shall not make me gainsay it, or accuse the innocent. I would not have shared the glory of the action with any one. And since it has failed, my life alone shall pay the penalty."

" Gag him," cried the officer. " If I listen longer, I shall be tempted to anticipate the course of justice, and I would not one pang should be spared him."

The command was obeyed. On searching him, they found a small powder-flask, a few bullets, notched, to make the wound they inflicted more dangerous, a clasp-knife, and a bible, in the first leaf of which was written a prayer for the deliverance and restoration of Queen Jane—a circumstance afterwards extremely prejudicial to that unfortunate lady.

After Underhill had been detained for some hours in the chamber where he was seized, an order arrived to carry him before the council. Brought before them, he answered all their interrogations firmly, confessed his design, related how he had planned it, and denied as before, with the strongest asseverations, that he had any accomplice. When questioned as to the prayer for Lady Jane Grey, whom he treasonably designated, " Queen Jane," he answered that he should ever regard her as the rightful sovereign, and should pray with his latest breath for her restoration to the throne—a reply which awakened a suspicion that some conspiracy was in agitation in Jane's favour. Nothing further, however, could be elicited, and he was ordered to be put to the rack.

Delivered by the guard to Lawrence Nightgall and his assistants, he was conveyed to the torture-chamber. The sight of the dreadful instruments there collected, though enough to appal the stoutest breast, appeared to have no terror for him. Scrutinising the various engines with a look of curiosity, he remarked that none of them seemed to have been recently used; and added, that they would soon be more frequently employed. He had not been there many minutes, when Mauger, the headsman, Wolfytt, the sworn tormentor, and Sorrocold, the chirurgeon, arrived, and preparations were made for administering the torture.

The rack has already been described as a large oaken frame, raised about three feet from the ground, having a roller at each end, moved by a lever. Stripped, and placed on his back on the ground, the prisoner was attached by strong cords to the rollers. Stationing themselves at either extremity of the frame, Mauger and Wolfytt each seized a lever, while Nightgall took

up his position at the small table opposite, to propose the interrogations, and write down the answers. The chirurgeon remained near the prisoner, and placed his hand upon his wrist. Those preparations made, Nightgall demanded, in a stern tone, whether the prisoner would confess who had instigated him to the crime he had committed.

"I have already said I have no accomplices," replied Underhill.

Nightgall made a sign to the assistants, and the rollers were turned with a creaking sound, extending the prisoner's limbs in opposite directions, and giving him exquisite pain. But he did not even groan.

After the lapse of a few moments, Nightgall said, "Edward Underhill, I again ask you who were your accomplices?"

No answer being returned, the jailer waved his hand, and the levers were again turned. The sharpness of the torture forced an involuntary cry from the prisoner. But beyond this expression of suffering, he continued silent.

The interrogation was a third time repeated; and after some effort on the part of the assistants, the levers were again turned. Nightgall and the chirurgeon both watched this part of the application with some curiosity. The strain upon the limbs was almost intolerable. The joints started from their sockets, and the sinews were drawn out to their utmost capability of tension.

After the wretched man had endured this for a few minutes, Sorrocold informed Nightgall, in a low tone, that nature was failing. The cords were then gradually relaxed, and he was unbound. His temples being bathed with vinegar, he soon afterwards revived.

But he was only recovered from one torture to undergo another. The next step taken by his tormentors was to place him in a suit of irons, called the Scavenger's Daughter—a hideous engine devised by Sir William Skevington, lieutenant of the Tower, in Henry the Eighth's reign, and afterwards corrupted into the name above mentioned. By this horrible machine, which was shaped like a hoop, his limbs were compressed so closely together that he resembled a ball; and being conveyed to an adjoining dungeon, he was left in this state without light or food for further examination.

CHAPTER XIII

HOW MAGOG NEARLY LOST HIS SUPPER; HOW HIS BEARD WAS BURNT; HOW XIT WAS PLACED IN A BASKET; AND HOW HE WAS KICKED UPON THE RAMPARTS

CONGRATULATIONS, rejoicings, and public thanksgivings followed the queen's preservation from the hand of the assassin. Courtenay, who had long planned a masque to be exhibited for her amusement within the Tower, thought this a fitting occasion to produce it. And the utmost expedition being used, on the day but one after Underhill's attempt, all was in readiness.

Great mystery having been observed in the preparations for the pageant, that it might come upon the spectators as a surprise, none, except those actually concerned in it, knew what was intended to be represented. Even the actors, themselves, were kept in darkness concerning it, and it was only on the night before, when their dresses were given them, that they had any precise notion of the characters they were to assume. A sort of rehearsal then took place in one of the lower chambers of the palace; at which the Earl of Devonshire assisted in person, and instructed them in their parts. A few trials soon made all perfect, and when the rehearsal was over, Courtenay felt satisfied that the pageant would go off with tolerable éclat.

As may be supposed, the three gigantic warders and their diminutive follower were among the mummers. Indeed, the principal parts were assigned them; and on no previous occasion had Xit's characteristic coxcombry been more strongly called forth than during the rehearsal. No consequential actor of modern times could give himself more airs. Perceiving he was indispensable, he would only do exactly what pleased him, and, when reprimanded for his impertinence, refused to perform at all, and was about to walk off with an air of offended dignity. A few conciliatory words, however, from the Earl of Devonshire induced him to return; and when all was arranged to his satisfaction, he began to exhibit a fun and humour that bid fair to outshine all his competitors.

The rehearsal over, a substantial repast was provided by the earl for his troop. And here, as usual, the giants acquitted themselves to admiration. Unfortunately, however, for Magog, his spouse was present, and his dull apprehension of his part at

the rehearsal having excited her displeasure, she now visited it upon his devoted head. Whenever he helped himself to a piece of meat, or a capon, she snatched it from his plate, and transferred it to those of his brethren.

Supper was nearly over, and the henpecked giant, who as yet had tasted nothing, was casting wistful glances at the fast-vanishing dishes, when Dame Placida arose, and saying she was greatly fatigued, expressed her determination to return home immediately. In vain Magog remonstrated. She was firm, and her hapless spouse was arising with a most rueful countenance to accompany her, when Ribald very obligingly offered to take his place and escort her. Dame Placida appeared nothing loth, and Magog, having eagerly embraced the proposal, the pair departed.

"And now brother," said Gog, "you can do as you please. Make up for lost time."

"Doubt it not," replied Magog, "and by way of commencing, I will trouble you for that sirloin of beef. Send me the dish and the carving-knife, I pray you, for with this puny bit of steel I can make no progress at all."

His request was immediately complied with, and it was pleasant to behold with what inconceivable rapidity slice after slice disappeared. In a brief space, a few bare bones were all that remained of the once-lordly joint. Magog's brethren watched his progress with truly fraternal interest. Their own appetites being satisfied, they had full leisure to minister to his wants; and most sedulously did they attend to them. A brisket of veal, steeped in verjuice, supplied the place of the sirloin, and a hare-pie, in due season, that of the veal.

Magog acknowledged these attentions with grateful murmurings. He was too busy to speak. When the hare-pie, which was of a somewhat savoury character, was entirely consumed, he paused for a moment, and pointed significantly to a large measure of wine at some little distance from him. Og immediately stretched out his arm, and handed it to him. Nodding to his brother, the married giant drained its contents at a draught, and then applied himself with new ardour to the various dishes with which his plate was successively laden.

"What would your wife say, if she could see you now?" observed Peter Trusbut, who sat opposite to him, and witnessed his proceedings with singular satisfaction.

"Don't mention her," rejoined Magog, bolting a couple of cheesecakes which he had crammed, at the same time, into his

capacious mouth; "don't mention her, or you will take away my appetite."

"No fear of that," laughed the pantler; "but what say you to a glass of distilled waters? It will be a good wind-up to your meal, and aid digestion."

"With all my heart," rejoined the giant.

The pantler then handed a stone bottle, holding perhaps a quart, and knowing his propensities, thought it needful to caution him as to the strength of the liquid. Disregarding the hint, Magog emptied the greater part of the spirit into a flagon, and tossed it off, as if it had been water. Peter Trusbut held up his hands in amazement, and expected to see the giant drop senseless under the table. But no such event followed. The only consequence of the potent draught being that it brought the water into his eyes, and made him gasp a little to recover his breath.

"How do you feel after it, brother?" inquired Og, slapping him on the shoulder.

"So valiant," hiccupped Magog, "that I think when I get home, I shall assert my proper position as a lord of the creation."

"Act up to that resolution, Master Magog," observed the pantler, laughing, "and I shall not think my liquor thrown away."

"If such be its effect," said Xit, who, it has before been remarked, had an unconquerable tendency to imitate, and, if possible, exceed the extravagancies of his companions, "I will e'en try a drop of it myself."

And before he could be prevented, the mannikin applied the stone bottle to his lips, and drained it to the last drop. If Magog's brain was sufficiently stolid to resist the effect of the fiery liquid, Xit's was not. Intoxication speedily displayed itself in the additional brilliancy of his keen sparkling little orbs, and in all his gestures. At first, his antics created much diversion, and he was allowed to indulge them freely; but before long he became so outrageous and mischievous, that it was found necessary to restrain him. Springing upon the table, he cut the most extraordinary capers among the dishes, breaking several of them, upsetting the flagons and pots of wine, tweaking the noses of the male guests, kissing the females, and committing a hundred other monkey tricks.

On being called to order, he snapped his fingers in the face of the reprover, and conceiving himself especially affronted by Gog, he threw a goblet at his head. Luckily, the missile was caught

before it reached its mark. He next seized a torch, and perceiving that Magog had fallen asleep, set fire to his beard, to arouse him. Starting to his feet, the giant clapped his hand to his chin—too late, however, to save a particle of his hirsute honours. His rage was terrific. Roaring like a wild bull, he vowed he would be the death of the offender; and would have kept his word, if it had not been for his brethren, who, seizing each an arm, restrained him by main strength, and forced him into his seat, where, after a few minutes, his anger gave way to laughter.

This was mainly attributable to an accident that befell Xit in his hurry to escape. Not being particular where he set his feet, the dwarf plumped into an open plum tart, the syrup of which was so thick and glutinous that it detained him as effectually as birdlime. In his terror, he dragged the dish after him to a considerable distance, and his grimaces were so irresistibly ludicrous that they convulsed the beholders with laughter. No one attempted to assist him, and it was only by the loss of both shoes that he could extricate himself from his unpleasant situation. Peter Trusbut then seized him, and thrusting him into a basket, fastened down the lid to prevent further mischief.

This occurrence served as the signal for separation. Og and Gog took their way to the By-ward Tower, the latter carrying the basket containing Xit under his arm, while Magog, bemoaning the loss of his beard, and afraid of presenting himself to his wife under such untoward circumstances, accompanied them as far as the gateway of the Bloody Tower. Here he paused to say good night.

"Would I could anticipate a good night, myself!" he groaned. "But I can neither eat, drink, nor sleep in comfort now. Ah! brothers, if I had but listened to your advice! But repentance comes too late."

"It does—it does," replied Gog. "But let us hope your dame will amend."

"That she never will," screamed Xit from the basket. "What a lucky escape *I* had—ha! ha!"

"Peace! thou stinging gadfly," roared Magog. "Am I ever to be tormented by thee!"

But as Xit, who imagined himself secure, only laughed the louder, he grew at last so enraged, that snatching the basket from Og, he placed it on the ground, and gave it such a kick, that it flew to the top of the ramparts beyond Traitor's Tower,

where it was picked up by a sentinel, and the dwarf taken out more dead than alive.

On reaching his habitation — which was the same Dame Placida had formerly occupied during her state of widowhood, at the right of the road leading from the Bloody Tower to the Green—Magog found she had not retired to rest as he expected, but was engaged in conversation with Ribald, who had been prevailed upon to remain for a few minutes to taste the ale for which she was so much, and so justly, celebrated. One cup had led to another, and the jovial warder seemed in no hurry to depart. The giant was delighted to see him, and, forgetting his misfortune, was about to shake him heartily by the hand, when his wife screamed out, "Why, Magog, what is the matter with your chin? You have lost your beard!"

Humbly deprecating her resentment, the giant endeavoured to explain. But as nothing would satisfy her, he was fain to leave her with Ribald, and betake himself to his couch, where he speedily fell asleep, and forgot his troubles.

CHAPTER XIV

OF THE MASQUE GIVEN BY COURTENAY IN HONOUR OF QUEEN MARY; AND HOW XIT WAS SWALLOWED BY A SEA-MONSTER

During the early part of the next day, the majority of the inmates of the Tower were on the tiptoe of expectation for the coming pageant, which was fixed to take place in the evening in the large court lying eastward of that wing of the palace, denominated the Queen's Lodgings. The great hall, used on the previous night for the rehearsal, was allotted as a dressing-room to those engaged in the performance, and thither they repaired a few hours before the entertainment commenced.

As the day declined, multitudes flocked to the court, and stationed themselves within the barriers, which had been erected to keep off the crowd. In addition to these defences, a warder was stationed at every ten paces, and a large band of halberdiers was likewise in attendance to maintain order. Banners were suspended from the battlements of the four towers flanking the corners of the court, namely, the Salt Tower, the Lanthorn Tower, the Wardrobe Tower, and the Broad Arrow Tower. The summits of these fortifications were covered with spectators,

as were the eastern ramparts, and the White Tower. Such windows of the palace as overlooked the scene were likewise thronged.

At the southern extremity of the court, stretching from the Lanthorn Tower to the Salt Tower, stood a terrace, raised a few feet above the level of the inclosure, and protected by a low-arched balustrade of stone. This was set apart for the queen, and beneath a mulberry-tree, amid the branches of which a canopy of crimson velvet was disposed, her chair was placed.

About six o'clock, when every inch of standing-room was occupied, and expectation raised to its highest pitch, a door in the palace leading to the terrace was thrown open, and the queen issued from it. Stunning vociferations welcomed her, and these were followed, or rather accompanied, by a prolonged flourish of trumpets. It was a moment of great excitement, and many a heart beat high at the joyous sounds. Every eye was directed towards Mary, who bowing repeatedly in acknowledgment of her enthusiastic reception, was saluted with, "God save your highness! Confusion to your enemies! Death to all traitors!" and other exclamations referring to her late providential deliverance.

The queen was attired in a rich gown of raised cloth of gold. A partlet, decorated with precious stones, surrounded her throat, and her stomacher literally blazed with diamonds. Upon her head she wore a caul of gold, and over it, at the back, a round cap, embroidered with orient pearls. In front, she wore a cornet of black velvet, likewise embroidered with pearls. A couple of beautiful Italian greyhounds, confined by a silken leash, accompanied her. She was in excellent spirits, and, whether excited by the promised spectacle, or by some secret cause, appeared unusually animated. Many of the beholders, dazzled by her gorgeous attire, and struck by her sprightly air, thought her positively beautiful. Smilingly acknowledging the greetings of her subjects, she gave her hand to the Earl of Devonshire, and was conducted by him to the seat beneath the mulberry-tree.

They were followed by a numerous train of dames and nobles, foremost among whom came Sir Henry Bedingfeld, who, as lieutenant of the Tower, claimed the right of standing behind the royal chair. Next to the knight stood the Princess Elizabeth, who viewed with the bitterest jealousy the devoted attention paid by Courtenay to her sister; and, next to the princess, stood Jane the Fool. Simon Renard also was among the crowd.

But he kept aloof, resolved not to show himself, unless occasion required it.

As soon as the queen was seated, another flourish of trumpets was blown, and from the great gates at the further end of the court issued a crowd of persons clothed in the skins of wild animals, dragging an immense machine, painted to resemble a rocky island. On reaching the centre of the inclosure, the topmost rock burst open, and discovered a beautiful female seated upon a throne, with a crown on her head, and a sceptre in her hand. While the spectators expressed their admiration of her beauty by loud plaudits, another rock opened, and discovered a fiendish-looking figure, armed with a strangely-formed musket, which he levelled at the mimic sovereign. A cry of horror pervaded the assemblage, but at that moment another rock burst asunder, and a fairy arose, who placed a silver shield between the queen and the assassin; while a gauze drapery, wafted from beneath, enveloped them in its folds.

At the appearance of the fairy, the musket fell from the assassin's grasp. Uttering a loud cry, a troop of demons issued from below, and seizing him with their talons bore him out of sight. The benignant fairy then waved her sword; the gauzy drapery dropped to her feet; and four other female figures arose, representing Peace, Plenty, Justice, and Clemency. These figures ranged themselves round the queen, and the fairy addressed her in a speech, telling her that these were her attributes; that she had already won her people's hearts, and ended by promising her a long and prosperous reign. Each word, that applied to Mary, was followed by a cheer from the bystanders, and when it was ended, the applauses were deafening. The mimic queen then arose, and taking off her crown, tendered it to the real sovereign. The four attributes likewise extended their arms towards her, and told her they belonged to her. And while the group was in this position, the machine was borne away.

Fresh flourishes of trumpets succeeded; and several lively airs were played by bands of minstrels stationed at different points of the court-yard.

A wild and tumultuous din was now heard; and the gates being again thrown open, forth rushed a legion of the most grotesque and fantastic figures ever beheld. Some were habited as huge, open-jawed sea-monsters; others as dragons, gorgons, and hydras; others, as satyrs and harpies; others, as gnomes and salamanders. Some had large hideous masks, making them

look all head, some monstrous wings, some long coiled tails, like serpents; many were mounted on hobby-horses, and all whose garbs would permit them, were armed with staves, flails, or other indescribable weapons.

When this multitudinous and confused assemblage had nearly filled the inclosure, loud roarings were heard, and from the gateway marched Gog and Magog, arrayed like their gigantic namesakes of Guildhall. A long artificial beard, of a blue tint, supplied the loss which Magog's singed chin had sustained. His head was bound with a wreath of laurel leaves. Gog's helmet precisely resembled that worn by his namesake, and he carried a curiously-formed shield, charged with the device of a black eagle, like that with which the wooden statue is furnished. Magog was armed with a long staff, to which a pudding-net, stuffed with wool, was attached; while Gog bore a long lathen spear. The appearance of the giants was hailed with a general roar of delight. But the laughter and applauses were increased by what followed.

Once more opened to their widest extent, the great gates admitted what, at first, appeared to be a moving fortification. From its sides projected two enormous arms, each sustaining a formidable club. At the summit stood a smaller turret, within which, encircled by a wreath of roses and other flowers, decorated with silken pennoncels, sat Xit, his pigmy person clothed in tight silk fleshings. Glittering wings fluttered on his shoulders, and he was armed with the weapons of the Paphian God. The tower, which, with its decorations, was more than twenty feet high, was composed of basket-work, covered with canvas, painted to resemble a round embattled structure. It was tenanted by Og, who moved about in it with the greatest ease. A loophole in front enabled him to see what was going forward, and he marched slowly towards the centre of the inclosure. An edging of loose canvas, painted like a rocky foundation, concealed his feet. The effect of this moving fortress was highly diverting, and elicited shouts of laughter and applause from the beholders.

"That device," observed Courtenay to the queen, "represents a tower of strength—or rather, I should say, the Tower of London. It is about to be attacked by the rabble rout of rebellion, and, I trust, will be able to make good its defence against them."

"I hope so," replied Mary, smiling. "I should be grieved